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KING DAVID

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THE BOOK
OF THE KINGDOM

VOLUME TWO

THE FOUNDATION PRESS, INC.
Cleveland, Ohio. Springfield, Mass. Kansas City, Mo.

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TO

THE ONCOMING GENERATION

AND TO ALL WHO WOULD HAVE A NEW
VISION OF THE BEAUTY AND
THE POWER OF THE
MESSAGE OF
LIFE

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PREFACE

THIS volume contains the lives of the kings of the Hebrew people who ruled over the undivided nation and over the separate kingdoms of Judah and Israel. Here is the tragic figure of Saul, together with the self-forgetting Prince Jonathan. Here is David, one of the most lovable characters in history. Solomon is here, a monarch like those in the Arabian Nights. Here are strong leaders like Uzziah, Hezekiah and Jehoshaphat, and fierce and unscrupulous men and women like Ahab and Jehu, Jezebel and Athaliah.

Even more important and interesting than some of these rulers are such prophets as the fearless Amos, the tender-hearted Hosea, the statesman Isaiah, Jeremiah, the man of many sorrows, and the pastor-priest Ezekiel, who kept up the courage of the people during siege and exile.

The narratives of the rulers of the Divided Kingdom, as ordinarily arranged, are so interwoven that it is almost impossible to find the order in which the kings reigned in either the northern or the southern kingdom. Here the reader may follow consecutively the history of the kings of Israel and of Judah. This arrangement will also help him to discover the different characteristics of these two little nations. The chart preceding the histories of the two kingdoms has been specially prepared for THE MASTER LIBRARY. It will give at a glance the relationships of Judah and Israel to each other and to the foreign nations outside of Palestine.

Introducing the outstanding characters among the kings are biographical sketches. Brief, graphic and compact, these are intended to afford the reader vivid glimpses of the personalities of these men, and to define the part they played in the development of the Hebrew nationality and religion.

The volume closes before the return from the Captivity. It leaves us eager to read on, to learn how these persistent people rose from their ruins, rebuilt their temple, and reorganized the nation.

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THE GREAT KINGS

When the high heart we magnify
And the sure vision celebrate,
And worship greatness passing by,
Ourselves are great.

—John Drinkwater

SAUL

“Hearken unto Their Voice and Make Them a King”

THE Bible introduces us to Saul with a most dramatic story. It shows us the son of a well-to-do farmer of the tribe of Benjamin, “a young man and a goodly”; then it explains what “goodly” means,—from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people. Saul was a young giant, ignorant as yet of the powers that lay within his tremendous frame, apparently untouched by any insight into his country’s need, and unconscious of any divine call to leadership. When the story opens, he is engaged in the prosaic task of hunting for lost donkeys. At the end of three days, despairing of finding them, he turns to go home but is persuaded by his nimble-witted servant to try his luck with a soothsayer. He borrowed of his servant “the fourth part of a shekel of silver,” and went to consult the man of God. That visit was epoch-making. In the early dawn, on the housetop, Saul received from the heart of this prophet a revelation and a baptism that shaped his whole career.

It is not difficult to imagine the conversation on the housetop. Samuel pointed toward the villages of Israel: to Gibeah garrisoned by the Philistines, to Mizpah, to Ramah, to Bethel, to Michmash—everywhere Philistine garrisons. He pointed to the frightened farmers going forth at break of day to their toil, every one fearful that before night his flocks or his children would be carried off by the rapacious soldiers of that nation to the westward whose grip had tightened year by year upon all the hill country. In that memorable hour Israel’s need and Saul’s opportunity were painted in such colors that, when the men came down, God gave Saul a new heart. In the shadow of the gate Samuel drew him aside and anointed him with the sacred oil, bidding him at the same time to tell no one and to bide his time.

Saul was now a king without a kingdom. But the opportunity to win a kingdom came shortly afterward. A call for help reached his village from the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead across Jordan. When Saul heard the tale of the Ammonites’ purpose to enslave these Israelites and to gouge out their right eyes in token of slavery, “the spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon him,” a great anger and a great purpose surged up within him. He sent a summons to all the warriors of Israel to follow him, and before two days were over, he had beaten the Ammonites and established his claim indisputably to be the leader of Israel. His election to the kingship was now a mere formality; the sacred Urim and Thummim by which Jehovah indicated his will became the register of popular approval. The voice of the people was the voice of God.

Saul's first duty was to shake the Philistines loose from their grip on Israel. The Bible tells the story of the first successful campaign — how Jonathan precipitated the crisis by murdering the garrison commander at Geba, how the Philistines gathered for vengeance and the Hebrews ran away, how Jonathan's exploit at Michmash started a panic in the ranks of the enemy, how Saul pursued, his victorious ranks constantly swelled by new recruits from the caves and the crevices where they had concealed themselves, how the battle rolled westward down the old valley of Aijalon where Jehovah had once given victory to Joshua and his warriors, and how at last the domination of the Philistines was broken. The struggle thus successfully begun lasted forty years until the last great tragedy of Mount Gilboa.

Saul's problem, however, was not the Philistines—it was himself The early experience with the band of prophets near Bethel revealed a rift within the psychic nature of this great Israelite, which, as the years went by, widened into a malady. The exact nature of it we do not know it was evidently some form of insanity which showed itself now as melancholia, now as jealousy, or anger, or even an impulse to murder. This malady is the beginning of that long story of jealousy in which David is the nominal victim, but Saul the real one; for it alienated one who might have been the chief supporter of his throne. It alienated also Samuel, the band of prophets, and probably all of those Israelites who chafed at the kingship and who longed for the good old theocratic days when the prophet Samuel was merely the counselor and guide of the heads of the Israelitish families. So the breach between Saul and his people widened. As the king felt his kingdom slipping away from him, his melancholia changed to the frenzied notion that God had forsaken him.

When, therefore, the Philistines gathered at Aphek for a final trial of strength, Saul felt that the crisis had come. The message brought by the medium of Endor from the dead Samuel confirmed his worst fears, and the defeated king died by his own hand next day on Mount Gilboa.

Saul deserves a higher place in the roll of Hebrew heroes than many have assigned him. One who reads all of the records impartially sees clearly that Saul was at worst only the victim of a mental disorder which wrecked his career and made him at times an irresponsible despot. This could not, however, obscure his many and great talents. David was nearer right than the biased chroniclers of later times when he twined the names of Saul and his noble son in one garland of praise:

"Saul and Jonathan, the loved and the lovely,
As in life, so in death, they were not divided.
They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!"

SAUL

The King Who Succeeded at First, but Failed at Last

FROM FARM TO THRONE

A LAD, SEARCHING FOR FARM ANIMALS, FINDS A KINGDOM

NOW there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, a mighty man of valor. And he had a son, whose name was Saul[1] [Asked of God], a choice young man and a goodly. There was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.

Now the asses of Kish Saul's father were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, "Take now one of the servants with thee, and rise, go seek the asses."

So Saul passed through the hill country of Ephraim, and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they found them not: then they passed through the land of Shaalim, and there they were not: and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found them not. When they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant that was with him, "Come, and let us return; lest my father cease caring for the asses, and be anxious for us."

But the servant said to him, "Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; perhaps he can show us the way we should go."

Then said Saul to his servant, "But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man? for the bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present to bring to the man of God: what have we?"

And the servant answered Saul again, and said, "Behold, I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver: that thou canst give to the man of God, to tell us our way." (Beforetime in Israel when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, "Come and let us go to the seer"; for he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer.)

Then said Saul to his servant, "Well said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was.

As they went up the hill to the city, they found young maidens going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?"

And they answered them, and said: "He is; behold, he is before you: make haste now, for he came today to the city; for there is a sacrifice of the people today in the high place.[2] As soon as ye come to the city, ye shall find him, before he goes up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he comes, because he doth bless the sacrifice; and afterward they eat who are bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about this time ye shall find him."

Saul and Samuel Meet for the First Time

And they went up into the city: and when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out toward them to go up to the high place.

Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying: "Tomorrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me."

So when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said to him, "Behold the man whom I spoke to thee of! this same shall reign over my people."

Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, "Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is."

And Samuel answered Saul, and said: "I am the seer: go up before me to the high place; for ye shall eat with me today, and in the morning I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thy heart. And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for thee and for all thy father's house?"

But Saul answered and said, "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou to me after this manner?"

Then Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the guest chamber, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, who were about thirty persons.

And Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said to thee, 'Set it by thee.'"

And the cook took up the shoulder, and that which was upon it, and set it before Saul.

And Samuel said, "Behold that which is left! set it before thee, and eat: for to this time hath it been kept for thee since I said, 'I have invited the people.'" So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

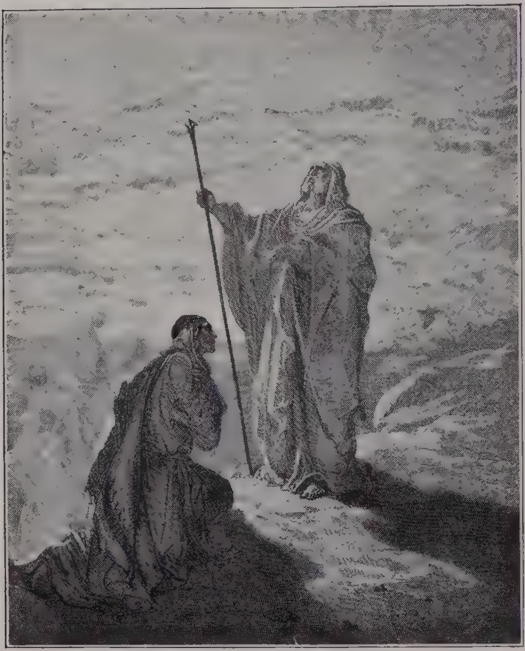
And when they were come down from the high place into the city, Samuel communed with Saul upon the housetop.

And they rose early: and it came to pass about the dawning of the day, that Samuel called to Saul on the housetop, saying, "Up, that I may send thee away."

Samuel Anoints Saul and Instructs Him

And Saul rose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad. As they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Bid the servant pass on before us," (and he passed on); "but stand thou still awhile, that I may show thee the word of God."

Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said: "Hath not the Lord anointed thee to be prince over his inheritance? When thou art departed from me today, then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulcher, in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say to thee, 'The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?'


SAMUEL BLESSES SAUL
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

"Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the plain of Tabor, and there shall meet thee three men going up to God to Beth-el, one carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine: and they will salute thee, and give thee two loaves of bread; which thou shalt receive of their hands. After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy; and the spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man. And let it be, when these signs are come to thee, that thou do as occasion serve thee; for God is with thee."

And it was so, that, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day. And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the spirit of God came mightily upon him, and he prophesied among them.[3]

And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied with the prophets, then the people said one to another, "What is this that is come to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Therefore it became a proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

And when he made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place. And Saul's uncle said to him and to his servant, "Whither went ye?"

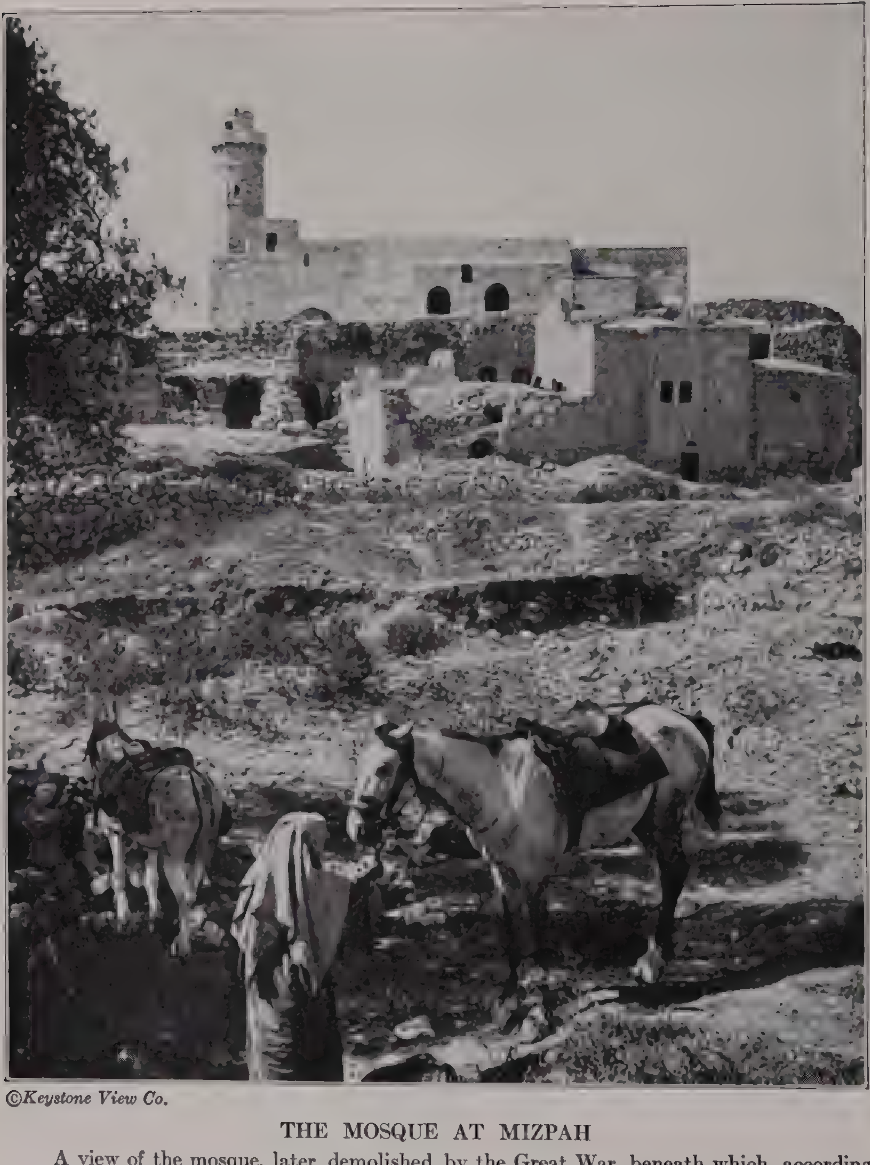
And he said, "To seek the asses: and when we saw that they were not found, we came to Samuel."

Then Saul's uncle said, "Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said to you."

And Saul said to his uncle, "He told us plainly that the asses were found." But of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spoke, he told him not.

"God Save the King"

And Samuel called the people together to the Lord to Mizpah; and said to the children of Israel: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you: and ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said to him, Nay, but set a king over us.' Now there-



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THE MOSQUE AT MIZPAH

A view of the mosque, later demolished by the Great War, beneath which, according to the Arabs, the body of the prophet Samuel rests. The mosque is, in reality, a Christian church built by the Crusaders in 1157 A.D. because of their understanding that the hill of Mizpah was the former home of the Tabernacle. In the ancient town of Mizpah, Samuel used to sit as judge over the people at their yearly gathering for an adjustment of their difficulties. What a contrast that busy scene must have been to the present desolation!

fore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands."

And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of the Matrites was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found.

Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, "Is the man yet come hither?"

And the Lord answered, "Behold, he hath hid himself among the baggage."

Then they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

And Samuel said to all the people, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?"

And all the people shouted, and said, "God save the king!"

Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.

But the children of Belial[4] said, "How shall this man save us?" And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But Saul held his peace.

Saul Becomes the Champion of His People

Then Nahash the Ammonite came up,[5] and encamped against Jabesh-gilead. And all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee."

And Nahash the Ammonite said to them, "On this condition will I make it with you, that I may thrust out all

GIBEAH OF SAUL

From a photograph, N. Y. Sunday-School Commission

Excavations by the American School of Archæology in 1922 have revealed several periods of building on this hilltop between 1200 B.C. and 70 A.D. Three different fortresses near the bottom of the mound probably date from Bible times. The lowest of them, covered with a layer of ashes, is the Gibeah which was destroyed by fire in the civil war between Israel and Benjamin. The second fortress dates from the time of Saul. The third fortress, probably, is the work of Asa. It was destroyed after a siege, as is indicated by the enormous throwing stones, human skulls and ashes that characterize this stratum. The latest structure belongs to the Maccabean period. As a place of strategic importance, Gibeah formed the base of Saul's operations against the Philistines. It was for some time in the possession of the Philistines, but Jonathan took it from them and they retired to Michmash.

your right eyes; and I will lay it for a reproach upon all Israel."

And the elders of Jabesh said to him, "Give us seven days' respite,[6] that we may send messengers unto all the borders of Israel; and then, if there be no man to save us, we will come out to thee."

Then came the messengers to Gibeah, the city of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people: and all the people lifted up their voice, and wept.

And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, "What aileth the people that they weep?"

Then they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.

Thereupon the spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard these words, and his anger was kindled greatly. And he took a yoke of oxen, and cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the borders of Israel by the hand of messengers, saying, "Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen."

So the fear of the Lord fell on the people, and they came out with one consent. And they said to the messengers that came, "Thus shall ye say to the men of Jabesh-gilead, 'Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, ye shall have help.'"

And the messengers came and made it known to the men of Jabesh; and they rejoiced. Therefore the men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will come out to you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good to you."

And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they who remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.

Then the people said to Samuel, "Who is he that said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' bring the men, that we may put them to death."

But Saul said, "There shall not a man be put to death this day; for today the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel."

Then said Samuel to the people, "Come, and let us go to Gilgal,[7] and renew the kingdom there."

So all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

JONATHAN'S NOTABLE VICTORY

King Saul Rallies His Army

When he had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel; whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan [Whom God Gave] in Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent. And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. For Saul had blown the trumpet throughout the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear!"

And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.

Then the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the seashore in multitude: and they came up, and camped in Michmash, eastward from Beth-aven [that is, Beth-el].

When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were distressed), then the people hid themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in coverts, and in pits. And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead; but as for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

The King Disobeys the Lord

Now he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.

And Saul said, "Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings." And he offered the burnt offering.

Then it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.

And Samuel said, "What hast thou done?"

And Saul said: "Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; therefore said I, 'The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord': I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering."

And Samuel said to Saul: "Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God,[8] which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee."

And Samuel rose, and got him up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.

Israel Is Unprepared for War

And Saul numbered the people that remained with him, about six hundred men. And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people that were present with them, abode in Gibeah of Benjamin; but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: one company turned unto the way that leadeth to Ophrah, unto the land of Shual: and another company turned the way to Beth-horon: and another company turned to the way of the border that looketh to the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, "Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears"; but all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his ax, and his mattock. (Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.) So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan; but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.

And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash.

Two Men Rout a Garrison

Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man that bore his armor, "Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that is on the other side." But he told not his father. And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone.

Now between the passes, by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistines' garrison, there was a rocky crag on the one side, and a rocky crag on the other side. The one crag rose up on the north in front of Michmash, and the other on the south in front of Geba.

And Jonathan said to the young man that bore his armor, "Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few."

And his armor-bearer said to him, "Do all that is in thy heart: turn thee; behold, I am with thee according to thy heart."

Then said Jonathan: "Behold, we will pass over to these men, and we will disclose ourselves to them. If they say thus to us, 'Tarry until we come to you'; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up to them. But if they say thus, 'Come up to us'; then we will go up: for the Lord

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MICHMASH

When the Philistines were expelled from Geba, they took refuge in this hill of Michmash. Here occurred that remarkable feat whereby Jonathan and his armor-bearer put to flight the entire garrison. In later days Jonathan, brother of the great Judas Maccabeus, made here his capital.

hath delivered them into our hand; and this shall be the sign to us."

And both of them disclosed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, "Behold, the Hebrews are coming forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves." And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armor-bearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you something."

And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Come up after me: for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel." And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armor-bearer after him: and they fell before

Jonathan; and his armor-bearer slew after him. And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were half an acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.

A Prince Sets a Bad Example

Now the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, "Cursed be the man that eateth any food until the evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies."[9] So none of the people tasted any food.

And all they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground. And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: for the people feared the oath. But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in the honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were brightened.

Then answered one of the people, and said, "Thy father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, 'Cursed be the man that eateth food this day.'" And the people were faint.

Then said Jonathan: "My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been brightened, because I tasted a little of this honey. How much more, if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?"

And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon: and the people were very faint. So the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground: and the people ate them with the blood.

Then they told Saul, saying, "Behold, the people sin against the Lord, in that they eat with the blood."[10]

THE PEOPLE OPPOSE THE KING'S DECREE

And Saul said, "Draw ye near hither, all the chief of the people: and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day. For as the Lord liveth, who saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die." But there was not a man among all the people that answered him.

Then said he to all Israel, "Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side."

And the people said to Saul, "Do what seemeth good to thee."

Therefore Saul said to the Lord God of Israel, "Give a perfect lot."[11] And Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot: but the people escaped.

Then Saul said, "Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son." And Jonathan was taken.

Then Saul said to Jonathan. "Tell me what thou hast done."

And Jonathan told him, and said, "I did certainly taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in my hand; and lo, I must die."

And Saul said, "God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan."

But the people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day."

So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.

THE DISOBEDIENCE AND REJECTION OF SAUL

THE KING DISREGARDS THE PROPHET'S COMMAND

So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them. And he gathered a host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them. And there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul.

(Samuel had commanded Saul to smite the Amalekites and to destroy utterly all that they had; but Saul had spared some of them and some of their cattle.)

Then Samuel came to Saul. And Saul said to him, "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the word of the Lord."

But Samuel said, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"

And Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites. For the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed."

And Samuel said to Saul, "Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night."

And Samuel said: "When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, 'Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.' Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?"

And Saul said to Samuel: "Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord thy God in Gilgal."

The Prophet Rejects the King

And Samuel said:

> "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings
> and sacrifices,
> As in obeying the voice of the Lord?
> Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
> And to hearken than the fat of rams.
> For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,
> And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

"Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

And Saul said to Samuel: "I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words; because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord."

And Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with thee. For thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel."

And as Samuel turned about to go away, Saul laid hold upon the skirt of his robe, and it rent. And Samuel said to him, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou. Also the Strength of Israel will not lie, for he is not a man."

Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house, to Gibeah of Saul. And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul.

A Shepherd Boy Plays Before the King

Now the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.[12] And Saul's servants

DAVID BROUGHT BEFORE SAUL

From a painting by Louisa Starr Canziani

Patriotism and religion were fused in the fight of David against Goliath. It was because the giant had defied the armies of the living God that David slew him. Before Saul he kneels humbly in token of his loyalty. It is interesting to note the humility of this truly great warrior-boy. His posture here suggests Shakespeare's words:

"All our service
In every point twice done, and then done double
Were poor and single business."

said to him: "Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our lord now command thy servants, who are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a skilful player on a harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well."

And Saul said to his servants, "Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me."

Then answered one of the servants, and said, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him."

Wherefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me David thy son, who is with the sheep."

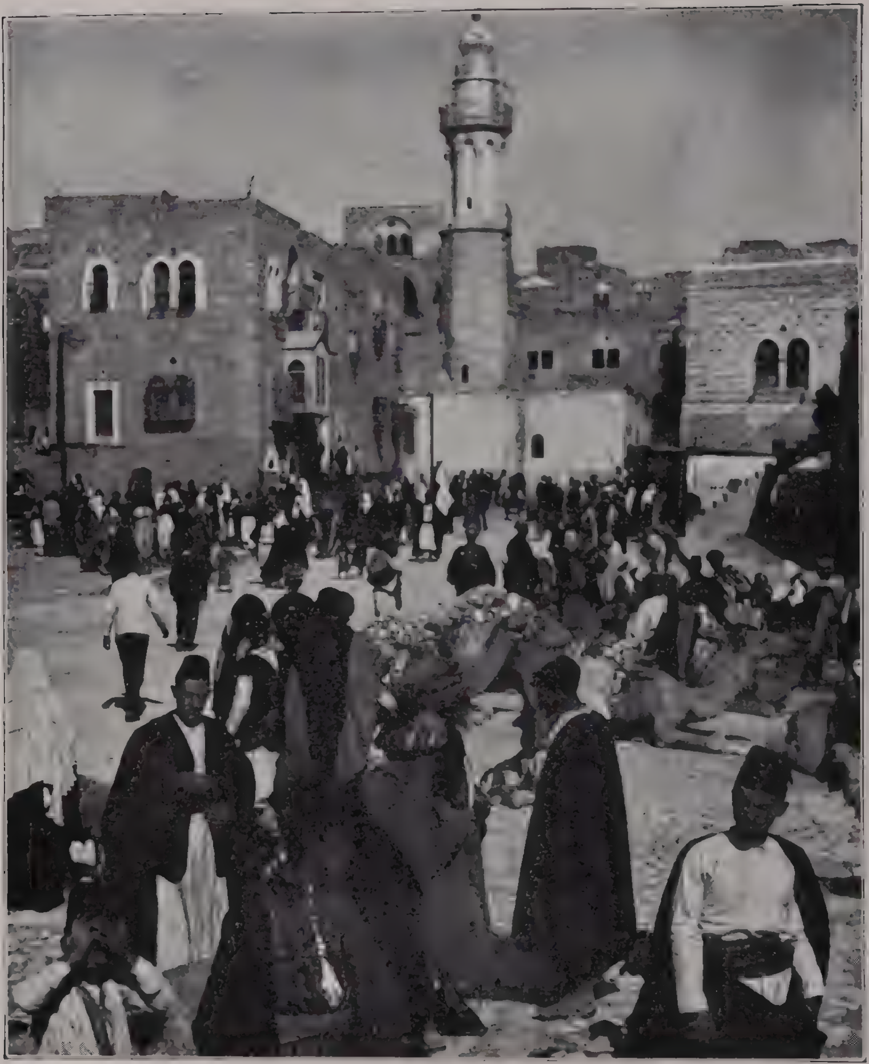
So Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son to Saul.

And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armor-bearer.

And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favor in my sight."

And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

Saul's reign continued for a number of years. His melancholy increased and brought with it despondency and jealousy. As Saul's light faded, the star of young David brightened. The remainder of the story of Saul is best told as a part of the life of David.



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THE MARKET PLACE, BETHLEHEM

Ever since Bethlehem became a village, this spot has served as a market place. From the Jerusalem road the main street twists down into it between the well-built city hall on the right of the picture and the mosque marked by a minaret in the center. Just behind us frowns the old Church of the Nativity, built over a cave that has been regarded as the birthplace of Jesus. In David's day the houses were much less pretentious, but its illustrious citizens,—Ruth, David, Joab, Jesus, Jerome—have made the little town immortal.

How it stirs the imagination when one realizes that Ruth long ago gleaned in the fields nearby, and that not far away the boy David once kept his father's sheep!

DAVID

"The Lord Hath Sought Him a Man After His Own Heart"

THE Bible tells us of three ways by which David was introduced to public life. At one point in the narrative we find Samuel going by divine suggestion to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem and anointing the youthful David to be Saul's successor. Probably before that, in order to soothe Saul during the paroxysms of his mental trouble, David had been brought to court on account of his skill in music. In another account, David goes to visit his brothers while they are in Saul's army fighting the Philistines, and by slaying the giant Goliath he becomes a popular hero whom Saul finds it advisable to attach to his regiment. Thus, Saul and his successor are often brought into personal contact, and the former quickly conceives a jealousy that goes beyond all bounds. The ground for that jealousy, undoubtedly, lay in David's wonderful skill in war, though his skill as a manipulator of men constituted a truer basis.

David's preparation for the kingship was a trying period of exile. Saul's jealousy drove him into the wilderness and made him an outlaw. But during all these stormy years he had his eye on the future, and the presents he sent so constantly to the elders of the tribe of Judah of the spoils taken in his raids indicate sufficiently David's genius for politics. When Saul was killed at Gilboa, David had already captured the hearts of the men of Judah. They at once crowned him king of their tribe at Hebron.

In the next period, David plays the rôle of an astute statesman. While doing nothing to offend the strong northern tribes, which still were loyal to the memory of Saul's son Ishbaal, he so manipulated affairs that his own position became stronger while that of his rival became weaker. Even after the unfortunate assassination of Abner by Joab, and the assassination of Ishbaal, David was nevertheless able to bring about his coronation at the hands of united Israel.

David now becomes a successful warrior against his erstwhile friends the Philistines. Though often on the verge of defeat, he managed ultimately to snatch victory from these ancient foes of Israel, and even to reduce the Philistine cities to a position of vassalage. In this period also he captured the city of Jerusalem, hitherto regarded as impregnable, and made it his capital. Extending the war now beyond the bounds of Israel, he reduced to submission the Ammonites on the east, the Moabites and the Edomites on the south, and even the far-away Arameans in Damascus and Syria. With the unwarlike Phœnicians he made a treaty of peace. By securing his frontiers and by organizing in masterly fashion his kingdom within, he was able to establish a kingdom that held for two generations a dominant position among the lands west of the Euphrates Valley.

One event in David's reign proved in the light of succeeding history to have the most far-reaching consequences. This was his recapture of the ark and his establishment of it in Jerusalem. Though David had no intention of making Jerusalem the one center of worship, we can now see that this act was the first in that long series which made Jerusalem the Holy City of the Jews, then of the Christians, then of the Moslems; the pivot about which so many of the wars and the great movements of history have turned.

The final chapter in the life of David is indeed a sad one. It is in the nature of a Nemesis, a moral result of the weaknesses and mistakes of David himself. His children proved to be great trials. The crisis of his bitterness came when his own son Absalom revolted and all but won the crown, only to perish at the hands of Joab. David's conduct after the death of Absalom reveals an old man's weaknesses. It almost cost him his throne a second time through the revolt of Sheba. Famine and plague still further darkened the closing days of his reign, and his life went out in weakness and ignominy while his sons wrangled for the succession even before their father was dead.

The personality of David made a profound impression upon the men of his own and later times. At the root of this admiration undoubtedly lay David's early personal charm and his capacity for friendship. With maturity came the developed capacity for organization. David had also a strongly religious nature. Throughout the Bible narratives one reads of his constant devotion to Jehovah. No public or private act of importance was undertaken without consulting the divine will. David had also an accomplishment that has endeared him to all times—he was a poet and a musician. His harp first brought him to the notice of Saul; his deepest emotions took naturally the form of poetry, and the inspiration he gave to the lyric side of worship so impressed the imagination of later ages that they ascribe to him nearly all of the psalms in their Psalter.

It is hardly possible to overestimate what David did for the Hebrews. He found them disorganized, discouraged, only slightly conscious of their unity of blood and their common destiny, holding on to a precarious existence in the midst of determined foes. He left them a nation united as they were destined never to be again, their loyalty centered about a dynasty and a capital city, conscious of a physical and moral superiority over their neighbors, the dominant race of that century in southwestern Asia. We can easily understand how the affections of Israel should so center about this figure, and why it was that a second David became the dream and hope of Israel's future.

DAVID

A Shepherd Boy Becomes a Great King

A CHOICE FROM THE SONS OF JESSE

NOW the Lord said to Samuel: "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thy horn with oil, and go; I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons."

But Samuel said, "How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me."

And the Lord said: "Take a heifer with thee, and say, 'I am come to sacrifice to the Lord.' And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint to me him whom I name to thee."

So Samuel did that which the Lord spoke, and came to Beth-lehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Comest thou peaceably?"

And he said, "Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice to the Lord: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice. And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him."

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel.

But he said, "Neither hath the Lord chosen this one."
Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by.
But he said, "Neither hath the Lord chosen this one."
And Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel.

But Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord hath not chosen these."

Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are here all thy children?"

And he said, "There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep."

And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither."

So he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look on.

SAMUEL ANOINTS DAVID
From a drawing by Isings

Then the Lord said, "Rise, anoint him! for this is he."

So Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the spirit of the Lord came upon David [Beloved] from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

He chose David also his servant,
And took him from the sheepfolds:
From following the ewes he brought him,
To be the shepherd of Jacob his people,

And Israel his inheritance.
So he was their shepherd according to the integrity
of his heart,
And guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

David the son of Jesse,
The man who was raised on high,
The anointed of the God of Jacob,
And the sweet psalmist of Israel.

DAVID AND GOLIATH

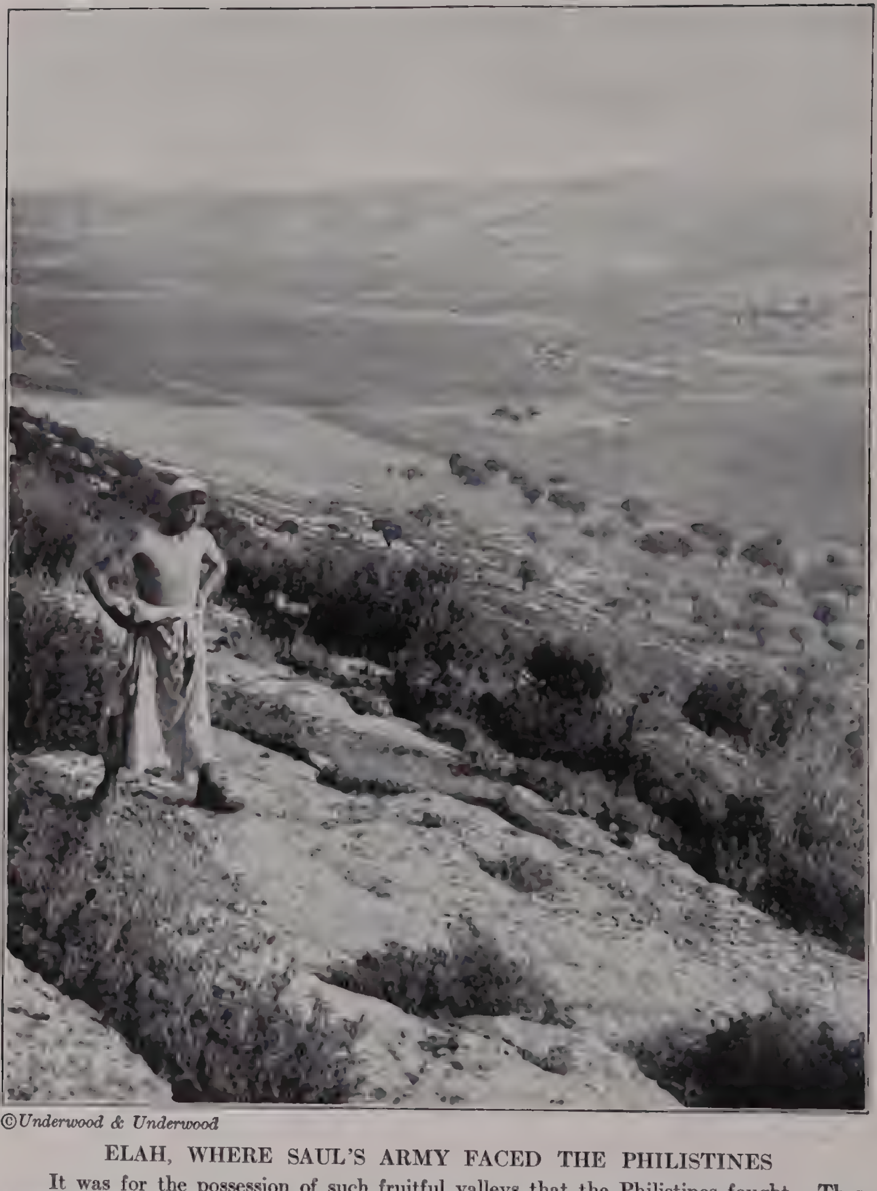
A Lad Accepts the Challenge of a Giant

GOLIATH DEFIES THE ARMIES OF ISRAEL

Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and camped in the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side; and there was a valley between them.

Then there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a javelin of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him.

And he stood and cried to the armies of Israel, and said to them: "Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then



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ELAH, WHERE SAUL'S ARMY FACED THE PHILISTINES

It was for the possession of such fruitful valleys that the Philistines fought. These slopes may easily become rich with vine and olive, the bottom may again rustle with golden wheat as in the days of old. At the head of the valley to the left lies Bethlehem. The trail from it to the plain runs past the olive trees at the foot of the terraced slope. Beside the opposite hills is the little gully where shepherd lads may still pick up pebbles for the sling. In fancy we can see the Philistines on this side, and the Hebrews on the other.

shall ye be our servants, and serve us." And the Philistine said, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together."

When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

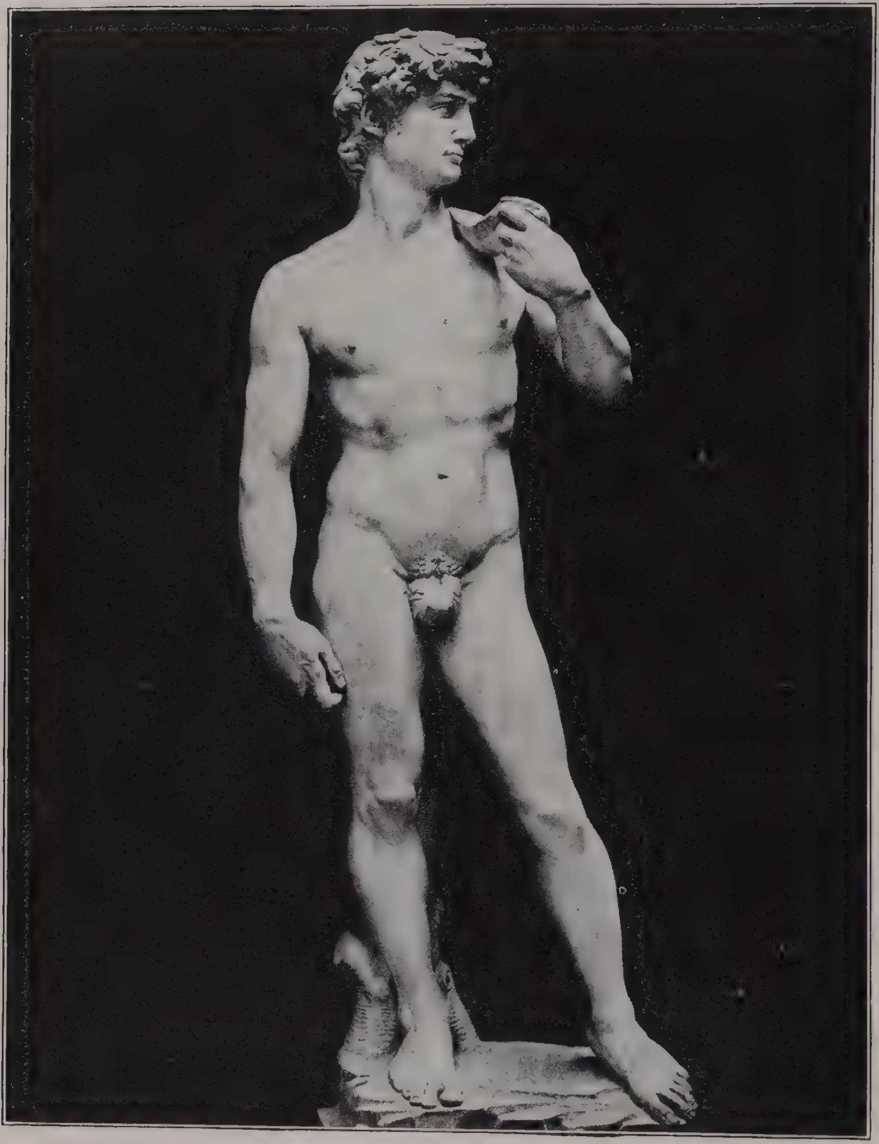
Now the three eldest sons of Jesse had gone and followed Saul to the battle. And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

THE YOUNG SHEPHERD VISITS THE ARMY

Then said Jesse to David his son: "Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched grain, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; and carry these ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and bring back a token of their welfare."

So David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took the presents, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the barricade of wagons, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle. For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army. And David left his presents in the hand of the keeper of the baggage, and ran into the army, and came and greeted his brethren. And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spoke according to the same words: and David heard them. And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

And the men of Israel said, "Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up. And it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel."



DAVID

From a sculpture by Michelangelo

This David is the incarnation of the spirit of youth—the spirit of courage, of confidence, of adventure. He stands here alert, measuring the distance with his eye. When the slow-moving Goliath presents the perfect mark, then the poise will become action and with the speed of lightning the stone will leave the sling.

Then David spoke to the men that stood by him, saying, "What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

And the people answered him after this manner, saying, "So shall it be done to the man that killeth him."

And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said: "Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thy heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle."

But David said, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

And when the words were heard which David spoke, they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him.

THE YOUTH OFFERS TO FIGHT THE GIANT

And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

But Saul said to David, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

Then David said to Saul: "Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant smote both the lion and the bear: and this Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God." David said moreover, "The Lord who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." Then Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with thee."

SAUL PUTS HIS ARMOR UPON DAVID

From a painting by James J. Tissot

So Saul clad David with his own apparel, and he put a helmet of brass upon his head; and he clad him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his apparel, and he tried to go, but in vain; for he had not proved it.

And David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them." So David put them off him.

DAVID CONQUERS WITH HIS SLING

Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in the shep-

11-35

DAVID AND GOLIATH

From a painting by Alessandro Turchi

herd's bag which he had; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine came on and drew near to David; and the man that bore the shield went before him.

When the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field."

Then said David to the Philistine: "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thy head from thee; and I will give the corpses of the host of the Philistines this day to the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this host shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands."

And it came to pass, when the Philistine rose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slung it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, and the stone sank into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of its sheath, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith.

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah rose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way, unto Ekron. And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they plundered their camp.

And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent.

DAVID, THE HERO OF THE PEOPLE

A King Becomes Jealous of a Youth

When Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine,[13] he said to Abner, the captain of the host, "Abner, whose son is this youth?"

And Abner said, "As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell."

And the king said, "Inquire thou whose son the stripling is."

As David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, "Whose son art thou, thou young man?"

And David answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-lehemite."

And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

And Saul took him that day and would let him go no more home to his father's house. And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely; and Saul set him over the men of war, and it was good in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

THE TRIUMPH OF DAVID

From a painting by Matteo Rosselli

David, the hero, bearing the huge sword and the gruesome trophy is accompanied by the rejoicing daughters of Israel. With admiration they gaze at him while they chant, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

And as they came, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. And the women sang one to another as they played, and said,

"Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands."

Then Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?" And Saul eyed David enviously from that day and forward. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

Saul Attacks David

And it came to pass on the morrow that an evil spirit came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house. And David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand.

And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, "I will smite David even to the wall with it." But David avoided out of his presence twice.

And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul.

Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him. Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.

David Marries the King's Daughter

Now Michal Saul's daughter loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. And Saul said, "I will give her to him, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistine may be against him." Wherefore Saul commanded his servants, saying, "Commune with David secretly, and say, 'Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son-in-law.'"

Then Saul's servants spoke those words in the ears of David.

DAVID AND SAUL

From a drawing by Simeon Solomon

The special nature of Saul's genius is suggested by his spear. The varied talents of David are recalled by his harp and shepherd's crook, while his prophetic rôle as a foretype of Christ is expressed by the halo.

And David said, "Seemeth it to you a light thing to become the king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?"

And the servants of Saul told him, saying, "On this manner spoke David."

Then Saul said, "Thus shall ye say to David, 'The king desireth not any dowry, but a hundred of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies.' " But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law. Wherefore David rose and went, he and his men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred men; and David brought them in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.

Now Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Michal Saul's daughter loved him. And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy continually. Then the princes of the Philistines went forth: and it came to pass, after they went forth, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much set by.

DAVID'S SONG TO THE HARP

Then I tuned my harp,—took off the lilies we
twine round its chords
Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the noon-
tide—those sunbeams like swords!
And I first played the tune all our sheep know,
as, one after one,
So docile they come to the pen-door till folding
be done.

They are white and untorn by the bushes, for
lo, they have fed
Where the long grasses stifle the water within
the stream's bed;
And now one after one seeks its lodging, as
star follows star
Into eve and the blue far above us,—so blue
and so far!

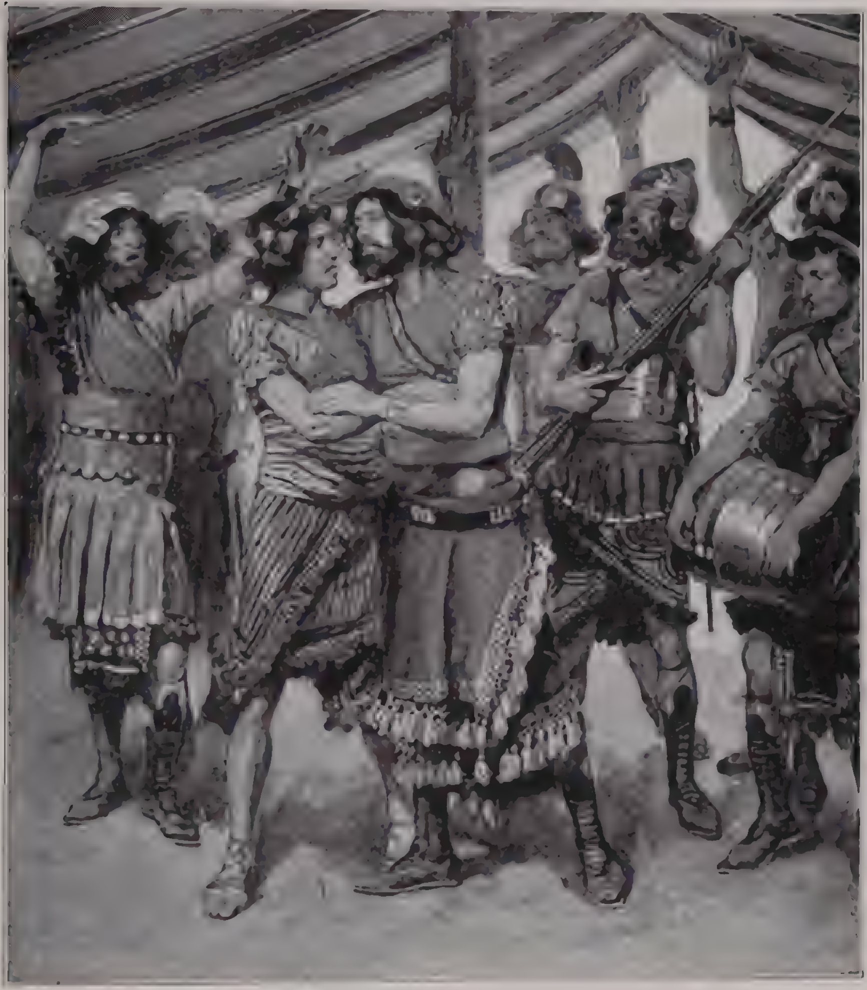
Then the tune, for which quails on the cornland
will each leave his mate
To fly after the player; then, what makes the
crickets elate
Till for boldness they fight one another; and
then, what has weight
To set the quick jerboa a-musing outside his
sand-house
There are none such as he for a wonder, half-
bird and half-mouse!
God made all the creatures and gave them our
love and our fear,
To give sign, we and they are his children, one
family here.

—*From "Saul," by Robert Browning*

THE FRIENDSHIP OF JONATHAN AND DAVID

JONATHAN DELIGHTS IN DAVID

Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David,



THE FRIENDSHIP OF DAVID AND JONATHAN
From a painting by James J. Tissot

and his apparel, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle. Then Saul spoke to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David, and Jonathan told David. And Jonathan spoke good of David to Saul his father, and said to him: "Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been toward thee very good: for he put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?

And Saul hearkened to the voice of Jonathan: and Saul swore, "As the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain."

Then Jonathan called David, and showed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past.

Then there was war again. David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled before him.

But an evil spirit was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his spear in his hands: and David played with his hand. And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the spear; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the spear into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night.

Michal's Shrewdness Saves Her Husband

Saul also sent messengers to David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning; and Michal David's wife told him, saying, "If thou save not thy life tonight, tomorrow thou wilt be slain."

So Michal let David down through the window: and he went, and fled, and escaped. And Michal took an image,[14] and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' hair for its bolster, and covered it with the clothes. And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick."

So Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him." And when the messengers came in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with the pillow of goats' hair for its bolster. And Saul said to Michal, "Why hast thou deceived me so, and let mine enemy go, that he is escaped?" And Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go; why should I kill thee?' "

THE ESCAPE OF DAVID
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

Then Saul gave Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti the son of Laish, who was of Gallim.

And it was told Saul, saying, "Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah." And Saul sent messengers to take David.

David Appeals to Jonathan

Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, "What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?"

And he said to him: "God forbid; thou shalt not die.

Behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will show it me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so."

But David swore moreover, and said: "Thy father certainly knoweth that I found favor in thine eyes; and he saith, 'Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved': but truly, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death."

Then said Jonathan to David, "Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee."

And David said to Jonathan: "Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at table[15]; but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even. If thy father at all miss me, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Beth-lehem his city: for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.' If he say

STREET IN BETHLEHEM

Down the main street from the market place, come these two mothers of Bethlehem. Their hands are full of merchandise, their tongues are full of gossip. The one on the left wears the ordinary headdress, but she on the right has on her Sunday costume with the high crown. In this picture one misses the brilliant colors of the embroidered yoke of her dress, though not the conspicuous patch by the left knee.

thus, 'It is well,' thy servant shall have peace; but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him. Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the Lord with thee: notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldst thou bring me to thy father?"

And Jonathan said, "Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would I not tell it thee?"

Then said David to Jonathan, "Who shall tell me? or what if thy father answer thee roughly?"

Jonathan Plans David's Escape

Then Jonathan said to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." And they went out both of them into the field.

And Jonathan said to David: "The Lord God of Israel be witness: when I have sounded my father about this time tomorrow, or the third day, behold, if there be good toward David, and I then send not to thee, and disclose it to thee; the Lord do so and much more to Jonathan. But if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will show it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the Lord be with thee, as he hath been with my father. And thou shalt not only while yet I live show me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not; but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth."

And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

Then Jonathan said to David: "Tomorrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty. When thou hast stayed three days, thou shalt go down quickly, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself before, and shalt remain by this stone heap. And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark. And, behold, I will send the lad, saying, 'Go, find out the arrows.' If I expressly say to the lad, 'Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them'; then come thou: for there is peace to thee, and no hurt; as the Lord liveth. But if I say thus to the young man, 'Behold, the arrows are beyond thee'; go thy way: for the Lord hath sent thee away. And as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the Lord is between me and thee forever."

THE DISTRACTED KING ATTACKS HIS OWN SON

So David hid himself in the field; and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat food. And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall; and Jonathan was opposite, and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty. Nevertheless Saul spoke not anything that day. And it came to pass on the morrow that David's place was empty: then Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to table, neither yesterday nor today?"

And Jonathan answered Saul: "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Beth-lehem; and he said, 'Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there; and now, if I have found favor in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren.' Therefore he is not come to the king's table."

Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him: "Thou son of a perverse, rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion? For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him to me, for he shall surely die."

But Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said to him, "Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?"

And Saul cast a spear at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.

So Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no food the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.

Jonathan Saves David's Life

And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him. And he said to his lad, "Run, find now the arrows which I shoot." And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.

And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, "Is not the arrow beyond thee?"

And Jonathan cried after the lad, "Make speed, haste, stay not!"

So Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. But the lad knew not anything: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad, and said to him, "Go, carry them to the city."

As soon as the lad was gone, David rose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times; and they kissed one another, and wept with one another, until David exceeded.

And Jonathan said to David: "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, 'The Lord be between me and thee, and between my family and thy family forever.'"

Then he rose and departed; and Jonathan went into the city.

THE CAVE OF ADULLAM

David and his three captains bold
Kept ambush once within a hold.
It was in Adullam's cave,
Nigh which no water they could have:
Nor spring nor running brook was near
To quench the thirst that parched them there.
Then David, King of Israel,
Straight bethought him of a well
Which stood beside the city gate
At Bethlehem; where, before his state
Of kingly dignity, he had
Oft drunk his fill, a shepherd lad;
But now his fierce Philistine foe
Encamped before it he does know.
Yet ne'er the less, with heat opprest,
Those three bold captains he addrest;
And wished that one to him would bring
Some water from his native spring.
His valiant captains instantly
To execute his will did fly.
The mighty three the ranks broke through
Of armèd foes, and water drew
For David, their belovèd king,
At his own sweet native spring.
Back through their armèd foes they haste,
With the hard-earned treasure graced.
But when the good king David found
What they had done, he on the ground
The water poured. "Because," said he,
"That it was at the jeopardy
Of your three lives this thing ye did,
That I should drink it, God forbid."

—*Charles Lamb*

©*Rau Art Studios*

SITE OF ANCIENT NOB

One of the ancient "high places" of the Canaanites taken over as a sanctuary by the invading Hebrews. Here David ate the showbread and took for future use the sword of Goliath that had been here dedicated to Jehovah.

DAVID A FUGITIVE

HE IS BEFRIENDED BY A PRIEST

Then came David to Nob,[16] to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech came to meet David trembling, and said to him, "Why art thou alone, and no man with thee?"

And David said to Ahimelech the priest: "The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said to me: 'Let no man know anything of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee.' Now therefore what is under thy hand? Give me five loaves of bread in my hand, or whatsoever there is present."

But the priest answered David, and said, "There is no common bread under my hand, but there is holy bread."

So the priest gave him holy bread: for there was no bread there but the showbread[17] [Presence Bread] that was taken from before the Lord, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.

Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the Lord; and his name was Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herdsmen that belonged to Saul.

And David said to Ahimelech, "Is there not here under thy hand spear or sword? for I have brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste."

And the priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If thou wilt take that, take it: for there is no other save that here."

And David said, "There is none like that; give it me."

David Flees to Adullam

Then David rose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. And the servants of Achish said to him: "Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying,

'Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands?' "

And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath. And he changed his behavior before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.

Then said Achish to his servants: "Lo, ye see the man is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me? Have I need of madmen, that ye have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?"

©*Underwood & Underwood*

THE CAVE OF ADULLAM

In limestone countries like Palestine, caves are abundant. Water trickling through fissures of the hill begins the cave-making process, and men continue it for their own purposes. Frequently, a simple cave becomes a labyrinth with ramifications that lead hundreds if not thousands of feet into the heart of the mountains. In this picture the entrance to one of these labyrinths is shown where the two boys are seen sitting in a narrow crack. Within, the space widens until there is room for an army as large as David's. David may well have made use of such a hiding place, but we do not know just which one he chose. The cave identified by the Crusaders as David's contains seven chambers on different levels which extend over six hundred feet into the mountain. This would be an ideal stronghold.

David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave of Adullam[18]: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, came to him; and he became captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

Then went David to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said to the king of Moab, "Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me." And he brought them before the king of Moab[19]: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the stronghold.

And the prophet Gad said to David, "Abide not in the stronghold; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah." Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hereth.

Saul Takes Vengeance on the Priests of Nob

When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that were with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him;) then Saul said to his servants that stood about him: "Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds; that all of you have conspired against me, and there is none that showeth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you that is sorry for me, or showeth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?"

Then answered Doeg the Edomite, who was set over the servants of Saul, and said, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. And he inquired of the Lord for him, and gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

Then the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that were in Nob: and they came all of them to the king.

Then Saul said, "Hear now, thou son of Ahitub."

And he answered, "Here I am, my lord."

And Saul said to him: "Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?"

Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said, "And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, who is the king's son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honorable in thy house? Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute anything to his servant, nor to all the house of my father: for thy servant knew nothing of all this, less or more."

And the king said, "Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father's house."

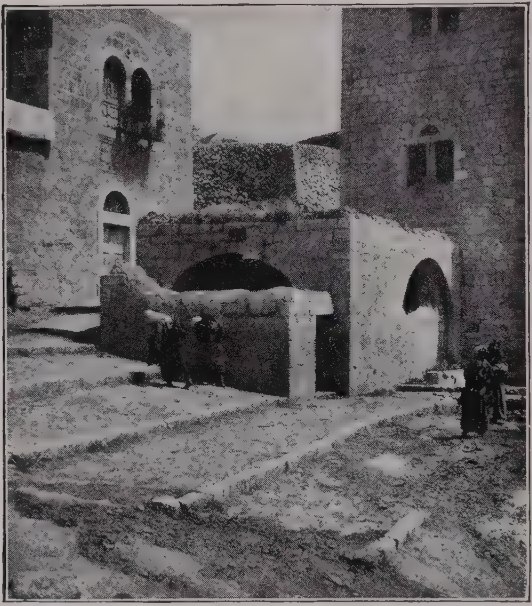
Then the king said to the footmen that stood about him, "Turn, and slay the priests of the Lord; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not show it to me." But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the Lord.

And the king said to Doeg, "Turn thou, and fall upon the priests." And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that wore a linen ephod. And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.

But one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.

And Abiathar showed David that Saul had slain the Lord's priests.

And David said to Abiathar: "I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house. Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard."



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THE WELL OF BETHLEHEM

The well is in reality a series of three cisterns, the principal one of which is called the well of David because, according to tradition, the water of this well was the object of David's great desire.

David's Men Are Mighty in War

Now these are the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, together with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the Lord concerning Israel.

And this is the number of the mighty men whom David had: Jashobeam, the son of a Hachmonite, the chief of the thirty; he lifted up his spear against three hundred, slain by him at one time.

After him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, who was one of the three mighty men. He was with David at Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a plot of ground full of barley. And the people fled from before the Philistines. And they stood in the midst of the plot, and defended it, and slew the Philistines; and the Lord saved them by a great victory.

Now three of the thirty[20] captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim. David was then in the stronghold, and the Philistines' garrison was then in Beth-lehem. And David longed, and said, "Oh that one would give me water to drink of the well of Beth-lehem, that is at the gate!" And the three broke through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David. But David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the Lord, and said, "My God forbid it me, that I should do this: shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it." Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

And Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew them, and had a name among the three. Of the three, he was more honorable than the two; and was made their captain: howbeit he attained not to the first three.

Benaiah[21] the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done mighty deeds; he slew two lion-like men of Moab. Also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day. And he slew an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits high. In the Egyptian's hand was a spear like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear. These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had a name among the three mighty men. Behold, he was honorable among the thirty, but he attained not to the first three: and David set him over his guard.

Now these are they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself close because of Saul the son of Kish: and they were among the mighty men, his helpers in war.

BENAIAH, "THE MAN WHO SLEW A LION"
From a painting by James J. Tissot

They were armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and in shooting arrows from the bow.

And of the Gadites there separated themselves to David to the stronghold in the wilderness, men of might, and men of war fit for battle, that could handle shield and spear;

Whose faces were like the faces of lions,
And they were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.

These of the sons of Gad were captains of the host: he that was least was equal to a hundred, and the greatest to a thousand. These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all its banks; and they put to flight all them of the valleys, both toward the east, and toward the west.

Also there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the stronghold to David.

And David went out to meet them, and answered and said to them: "If ye be come peaceably to me to help me, my heart shall be knit to you; but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in my hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it."

Then the Spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the thirty, and he said:

"Thine are we, David,
And on thy side, thou son of Jesse!
Peace, peace be unto thee,
And peace be to thy helpers;
For thy God helpeth thee."

Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.

David Distrusts the People of Keilah

Then they told David, saying, "Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshing-floors."

Therefore David inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I go and smite these Philistines?"

And the Lord said to David, "Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah."

And David's men said to him, "Behold, we are afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?"

Then David inquired of the Lord yet again. And the Lord answered him and said, "Rise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thy hand."

So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand.

And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. Then Saul said, "God hath delivered him into my hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars."

And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.

Now David knew that Saul secretly practiced mischief against him; and he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring hither the ephod."[22]

Then said David: "O Lord God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant."

And the Lord said, "He will come down."

Then said David, "Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?"

And the Lord said, "They will deliver thee up."

Then David and his men, who were about six hundred, rose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth. And David abode in the wilderness in strongholds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand. And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.

Jonathan Renews His Pledge of Friendship

And Jonathan Saul's son rose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God. And he said to him, "Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next to thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth."

And they two made a covenant before the Lord; and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.

The King Vainly Pursues the Fugitive

Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying: "Doth not David hide himself with us in strongholds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of the desert? Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand."

And Saul said: "Blessed be ye of the Lord; for ye have compassion on me. Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and see his place where his haunt is, and who hath seen him there: for it is told me that he dealeth very cleverly. See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hideth himself, and come ye again to me with the certainty, and I will go with you: and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that I will search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah."

RUGGED PASS OF EN-GEDI

This is the wilderness indeed, where for most of the days of the year the sun beats down pitilessly until the air in the narrow gorge quivers as in a furnace. The town En-gedi is notable for a spring of warm water which breaks out of the mountain about three hundred feet above the level of the Dead Sea. Its vineyards were once celebrated.

So they rose, and went to Ziph before Saul; but David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah on the south of the desert. Saul also and his men went to seek him. And they told David: wherefore he came down into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon. And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men encircled David and his men round about to take them.

But there came a messenger to Saul, saying, "Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land."

Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place Sela-hammahlekoth [The Cliff of Escapes].

And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strongholds at En-gedi.

SAUL'S NARROW ESCAPE

David Spares the Life of the Sleeping King

And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi."

Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet. And David and his men were sitting down in the innermost parts of the cave.

And the men of David said to him, "Behold, the day of which the Lord said to thee, 'Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thy hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good to thee.'" Then David rose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe secretly.[23]

DAVID SPARES THE SLEEPING SAUL
From a drawing by de Josselin de Jong

And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. And he said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord."[24] So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul.

But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way. David also rose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, "My lord the king!"

David Avows His Friendliness to the King

And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself. And David said to Saul: "Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, 'Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?' Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee today into my hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eyes spared thee; and I said, 'I will not put forth my hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed.' Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for because I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in my hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it. The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but my hand shall not be upon thee. As saith the proverb of the ancients:

'Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked;
But my hand shall not be upon thee.'

After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea?[25] The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thy hand."

Saul Is Touched by David's Generosity

It came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, "Is this thy voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.

And he said to David: "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. And thou hast showed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me into thy hand, thou killedst me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done to me this day. And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be

THE MOUNTAIN OF EN-GEDI

Half way down the western shore of the Dead Sea rises this mountain, with the terraces that mark the shores of the primeval Dead Sea still visible high up upon its flanks. A spring makes this wilderness an oasis celebrated of old. The Song of Solomon mentions its vines; Josephus its palms; the Talmud its balm. Here grow the acacia which produces gum arabic, and the henna which furnishes the orange dye with which the Arab women color their nails. In the mountain is one of the most important of all the labyrinthine caves of Palestine, in which might easily have happened the story of how David cut off the skirt of Saul's robe.

established in thy hand. Swear now therefore to me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my family after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house."

And David swore to Saul.

Then Saul went home; but David and his men got them up to the stronghold.

A WEDDING IN THE WILDERNESS

David Seeks a Favor

And David rose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran. Now there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats; and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. Now the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife was Abigail [A Father's Joy]; and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance; but the man was churlish and evil in his doings.

And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep. And David sent out ten young men, and David said to the young men: "Get you up to Carmel and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. And thus shall ye say to him: 'Peace be to thee, and peace be to thy house, and peace be to all that thou hast. I have heard that thou art shearing. Now thy shepherds who were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there aught missing to them, all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young men, and they will show thee. Wherefore let the young men find favor in thine eyes; for we come at holiday: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thy hand to thy servants, and to thy son David.' "

NABAL PROVES HIMSELF A CHURL

When David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased.

But Nabal answered David's servants, and said: "Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there are many servants nowadays that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men, whom I know not whence they be?"

So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings.

Then David said to his men, "Gird ye on every man his sword."

And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred stayed by the goods.

Published by arrangement with George D. Sproul

From a painting by Repin

ABIGAIL AND DAVID

But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying: "Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master: and he railed at them. But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we anything, as long as we were with them, when we were in the fields: they were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his house; for he is such a churlish fellow, that one cannot speak to him."

ABIGAIL SAVES THE SITUATION

Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched grain, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses. And she said to her young men, "Go on before me; behold, I come after you." But she told not her husband Nabal.

And it was so, as she rode on the ass, and came down by the covert of the hill, that, behold, David and his men came down toward her; and she met them.

Now David had said: "Surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained to him: and he hath returned me evil for good. So do God and more also, to the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light so much as one."

When Abigail saw David, she hastened, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground. And she fell at his feet, and said[26]: "Upon me, my lord, upon me be the iniquity; and let thy handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine ears, and hear thou the words of thy handmaid. Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this churlish fellow, even Nabal [Fool]. Fool is his name, and folly is with him: but I thy handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.

ABIGAIL WELCOMING DAVID
From a drawing by Isings

"Now this present which thy handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given to the young men that follow my lord. I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thy handmaid: for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days. And though man be risen up to pursue thee, and to seek thy life, yet the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God; and the lives of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as from the hollow of a sling.

"And it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over

Israel; that this shall be no grief to thee, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that thou hast shed blood without cause, or that my lord hath avenged himself. But when the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thy handmaid."

DAVID'S HEART IS WON

And David said to Abigail: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent thee this day to meet me: and blessed be thy discretion, and blessed be thou, who hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand. For in very deed, as the Lord God of Israel liveth, who hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hastened and come to meet me, surely there had not been left to Nabal by the morning light so much as one."

So David received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said to her, "Go up in peace to thy house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person."

And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken. Wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light. But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone.

And it came to pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal, and he died.

When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said: "Blessed be the Lord God, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept back his servant from evil: and the evildoing of Nabal hath the Lord returned upon his own head."

And David sent and spoke concerning Abigail, to take her to him to wife. And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spoke to her saying, "David hath sent us to thee, to take thee to him to wife."

And she rose, and bowed herself with her face to the earth, and said, "Behold, let thy handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord."

And Abigail hastened, and rose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of hers that followed her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

DAVID'S REPEATED FORBEARANCE

The King Falls into David's Power Again

And the Ziphites came to Saul to Gibeah, saying, "Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before the desert?"

Then Saul rose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before the desert, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.

David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

Then David rose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched; and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host. And Saul lay within the barricade, and the people pitched round about him.

Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, "Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp?"

And Abishai said, "I will go down with thee."

So David and Abishai came to the people by night; and behold, Saul lay sleeping within the barricade, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head; but Abner and his people lay round about him.

Then said Abishai to David, "God hath delivered thine enemy into thy hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time."

But David said to Abishai, "Destroy him not; for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?"

David said furthermore: "As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his head, and the cruse of water, and let us go."

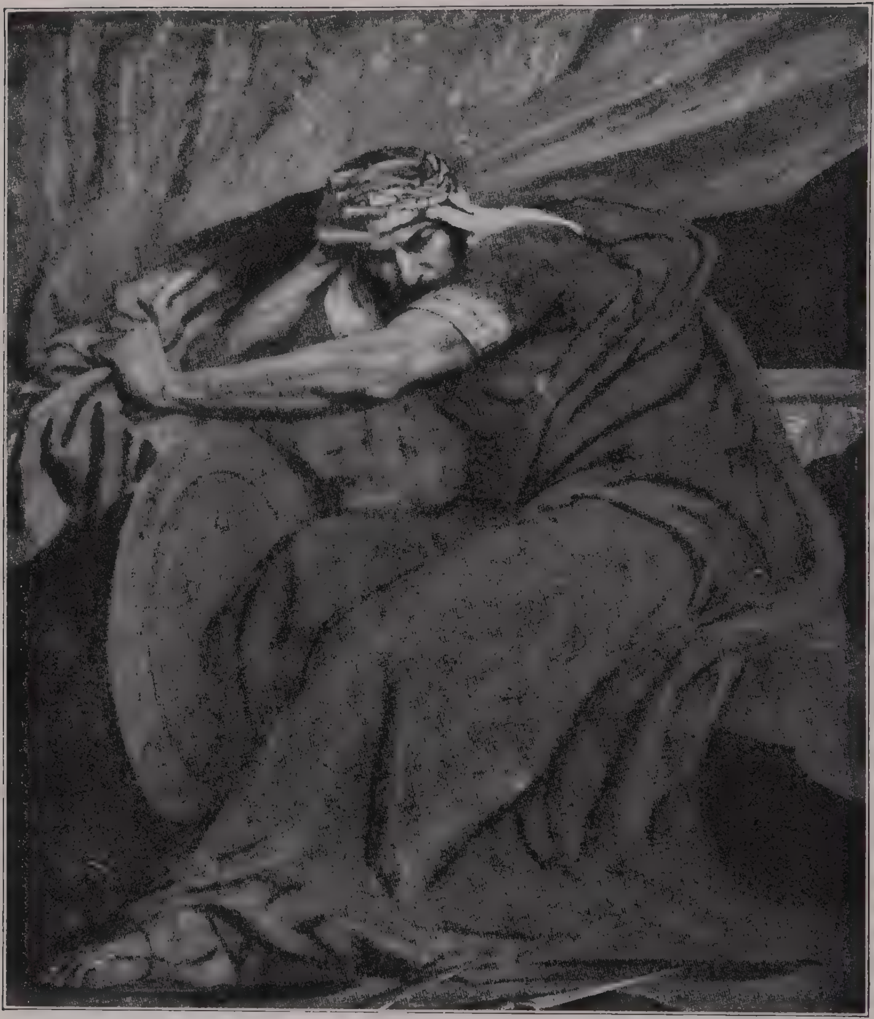
So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's head; and they got them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked; for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them.

David Appeals to Saul's Better Nature

Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of a hill afar off; a great space being between them: and David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, "Answerest thou not, Abner?"

Then Abner answered and said, "Who art thou that criest to the king?"

And David said to Abner: "Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in, to destroy the king thy lord. This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the Lord liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the Lord's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his head."



THE REMORSE OF SAUL
From a painting by Christopher Williams

Then Saul knew David's voice, and said, "Is this thy voice, my son David?"

And David said, "It is my voice, my lord, O king."

And he said: "Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in my hand? Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the Lord have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.'[27] Now, therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord; for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains."

Saul Acknowledges David's Clemency

Then said Saul, "I have sinned: return, my son David; for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly."

And David answered and said: "Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it. The Lord render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the Lord delivered thee into my hand today, but I would not stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed. And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation."

Then Saul said to David, "Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail."

So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

DAVID'S PATRIOTIC EXPLOIT

The Exile Performs a Service for His Country

By pretending to the Philistines that he was attacking his own people, David used to fall secretly upon the villages of his country's enemies.

And David said in his heart: "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that

I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines. Then Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any border of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand."

So David rose, and he passed over, with the six hundred men that were with him, to Achish, the king of Gath. And David dwelt with Achish at Gath,[28] he and his men. And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath; and he sought no more again for him.

And David said to Achish, "If I have now found favor in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?"

Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth to the kings of Judah to this day.

Now the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months.

Then David and his men went up, and made a raid upon the Geshurites, and the Girzites, and the Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even to the land of Egypt. And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel.

And he returned, and came to Achish.

And Achish said, "Whither have ye made a raid today?"

And David said, "Against the South of Judah, and against the South of the Jerahmeelites, and against the South of the Kenites."

And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring tidings to Gath, saying, "Lest they should tell on us, saying, 'So did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.'"

And Achish believed David, saying, "He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant forever."

DAVID AVENGES THE DESTRUCTION OF ZIKLAG

And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the South, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire: and had taken the women captive, that were therein; they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.

So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captive. Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep. And David's two wives were taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess.

Then David was greatly distressed; for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters; but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, "I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod." And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.

Then David inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them?"

And he answered him, "Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all."

So David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed. But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, who were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.

And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he ate; and they made him drink water; and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights.

And David said to him, "To whom belongest thou? and whence art thou?"

And he said: "I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick. We made an invasion into the south country of the Cherethites, and into that which belongeth to Judah and into the south country of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag with fire."

Then David said to him, "Canst thou bring me down to this company?"

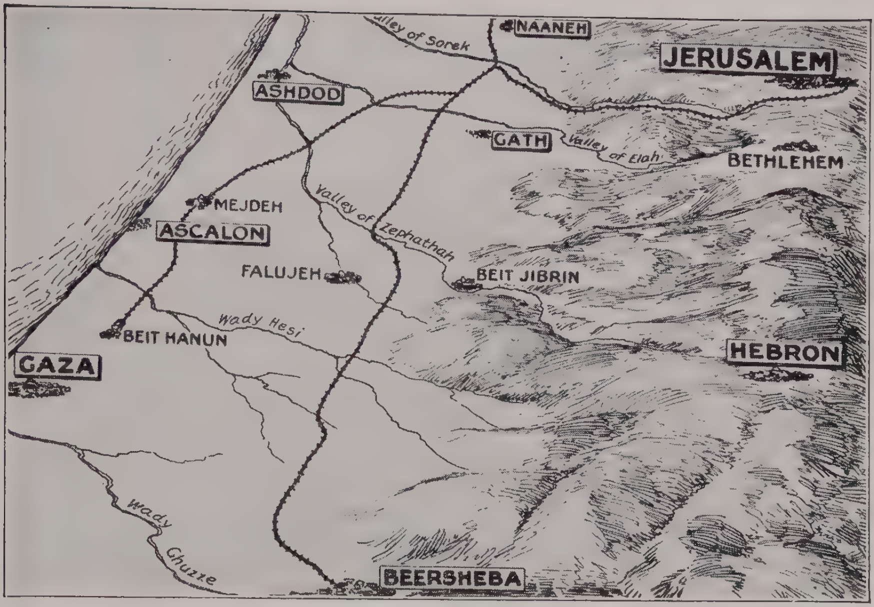
And he said, "Swear to me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me up into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company."

And when he had brought him down, behold, they were spread abroad over all the ground, eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah. And David smote them from the twilight even to the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, who rode upon camels and fled.

David Deals Fairly with His Men

Thus David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives. And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor anything that they had taken to them: David recovered all. And David took all the flocks and the herds, which they drove before those other cattle, and said, "This is David's spoil."

Then David came to the two hundred men, who were so faint that they could not follow David, whom also they had made to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that were with him.



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PHILISTIA

And when David came near to the people, he saluted them. Then answered all the wicked men and base fellows of those that went with David, and said: "Because they went not with us, we will not give them aught of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that he may lead them away, and depart."

Then said David: "Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the Lord hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. For who will hearken to you in this matter? for as his share is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his share be that tarrieth by the baggage: they shall share alike."[29] And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.

And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil to the elders of Judah, even to his friends, saying, "Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the Lord."

THE RAISING OF SAMUEL

Thou whose spell can raise the dead,
Bid the prophet's form appear.
"Samuel, raise thy buried head!
King, behold the phantom seer!"
Earth yawn'd; he stood the center of a cloud;
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
Death stood all glassy in his fixèd eye;
His hand was wither'd, and his veins were dry;
His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare;
From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,
Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunderstroke.

"Why is my sleep disquieted?
Who is he that calls the dead?
Is it thou, O king? Behold,
Bloodless are these limbs, and cold.
Such are mine: and such shall be
Thine tomorrow, when with me:
Ere the coming day is done,
Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
Fare thee well, but for a day;
Then we mix our moldering clay.
Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
Pierced by shafts of many a bow;
And the falchion by thy side
To thy heart thy hand shall guide:
Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
Son and sire, the house of Saul!"

—*From "Saul," by Lord Byron*

THE DOWNFALL OF KING SAUL

The Despondent King Seeks Counsel of a Woman

Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city.

And Saul had put away those that had divining spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

Then the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and encamped in Shunem. And Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped in Gilboa. And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

Then said Saul to his servants, "Seek me a woman that hath a divining spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her."

And his servants said to him, "Behold, there is a woman that hath a divining spirit at En-dor."

Then Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night.

And he said, "I pray thee, divine for me by the divining spirit, and bring him up for me whom I shall name to thee."

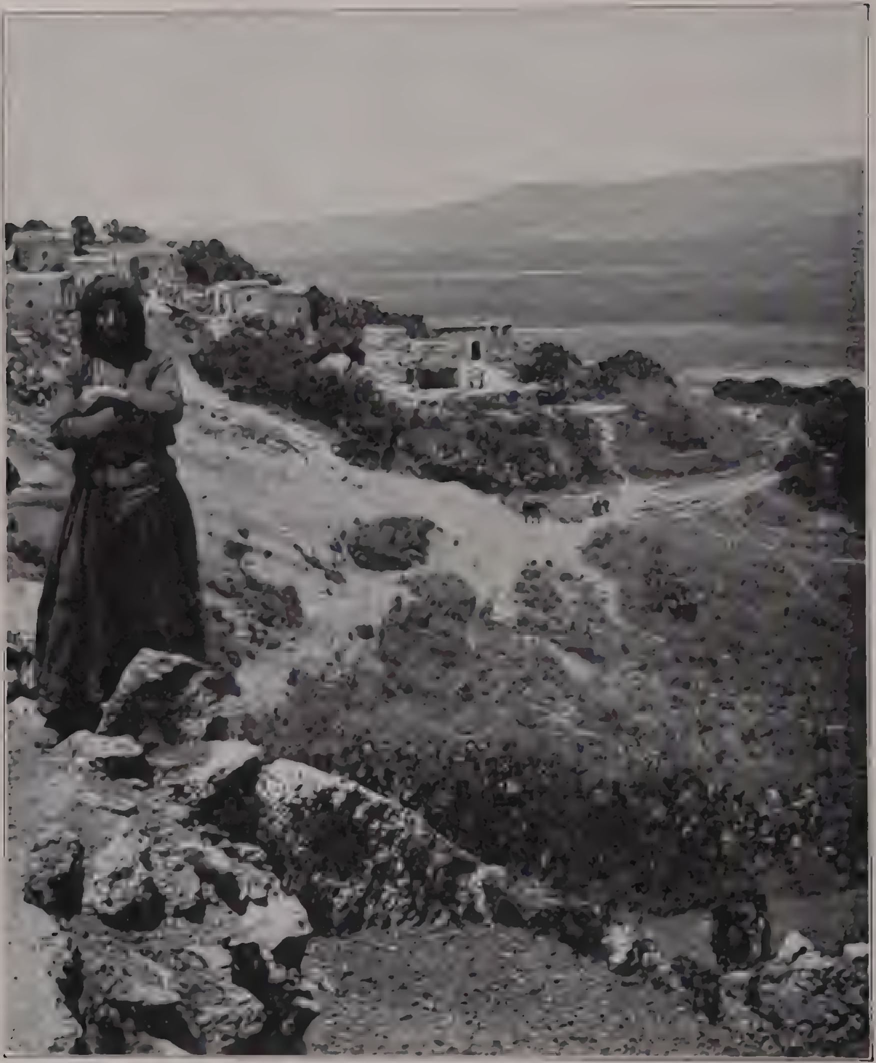
But the woman said to him: "Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have divining spirits, and the wizards, out of the land. Wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?"

And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, "As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing."

Then said the woman, "Whom shall I bring up to thee?"

And he said, "Bring me up Samuel."

And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice. And the woman said to Saul, "Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul."



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ENDOR

One of the most squalid villages of Palestine, situated in face of a most glorious view. An angle of the vast Plain of Esdraelon runs past it to the right and ends at Mount Tabor, which was the rendezvous of Deborah and Barak.

To this little village came Saul by night desperately seeking from the medium of Endor some word of courage for tomorrow's battle. He had passed around the Philistine sentinels and over several miles of difficult ground. Had not Saul's fear lost the battle for him before he went into it, he might not have been beaten, for his position on Gilboa was well-nigh impregnable.

But the king said to her, "Be not afraid: for what seest thou?"

And the woman said to Saul, "I see a god ascending out of the earth."

And he said to her, "What form is he of?"

And she said, "An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle."

Saul Inquires of Samuel's Spirit

Then Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.

And Samuel said to Saul, "Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?"

And Saul answered: "I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known to me what I shall do."

Then said Samuel: "Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing that the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And the Lord hath done to thee, as he spoke by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thy hand, and given it to thy neighbor, even to David. Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing to thee this day. And tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."

Then Saul fell immediately his full length upon the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no food all the day, nor all the night.

And the woman came to Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said to him: "Behold, thy handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I put my life in my hand, and have hearkened to thy words which thou spakest to me. And now, I pray thee, hearken also to the voice of thy handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way."

But he refused, and said, "I will not eat."

But his servants, together with the woman, persuaded him; and he hearkened to their voice. So he rose from the earth, and sat on the bed. And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she hastened, and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded it, and baked unleavened bread thereof. And she brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they ate.

Then they rose up, and went away that night.

THE PASSING OF SAUL

David Is Suspected by the Philistines

Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which is in Jezreel. And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: and David and his men passed on in the rearward with Achish.

Then said the princes of the Philistines, "What do these Hebrews here?"

And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, "Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who hath been with me these days, or rather these years, and I have found no fault in him since he came over to me to this day?"

But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him: and the princes of the Philistines said to him: "Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place where thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become an adversary to us. For wherewith should he reconcile himself to his master? should it not be with the heads of these men? Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying,

> 'Saul slew his thousands,
> And David his ten thousands'?"

Then Achish called David, and said to him: "Surely, as the Lord liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host is good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming to me to this day: nevertheless the lords favor thee not. Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines."

And David said to Achish, "But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been with thee to this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?"

And Achish answered and said to David: "I know that thou art good in my sight, as an angel of God: notwithstanding, the princes of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us to the battle.' Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart."

So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

SAUL AND JONATHAN DIE ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE

Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul.

And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

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MOUNT GILBOA WHERE SAUL FELL

This is not far from the ancient city of Bethshan, on the walls of which the Philistines impaled the bodies of Saul and his sons. The man standing on the ruins to the left, is looking toward the misty heights of Mount Gilboa faintly seen against the sky.

Then said Saul to his armor-bearer, "Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these Philistines come and thrust me through, and abuse me."

But his armor-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he likewise fell upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died,[30] and his three sons, and his armor-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side of Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

The Loyal Jabesh-gileadites Bury the Royal Dead

And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa. And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armor, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people. And they put his armor in the house of Ashtaroth; and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.[31]

And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant men rose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there. And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

David Mourns over Jonathan and Saul

Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, that a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

And David said to him, "From whence comest thou?"

And he said to him, "Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped."

Then David said to him, "How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me."

And he answered, "The people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also."

Then David took hold of his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: and they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

Then David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and Jonathan his son. (Also he bade them teach the children of Judah "The Song of the Bow"; behold, it is written in the book of Jashar.)[32]

THE DIRGE

"Thy glory, O Israel, is slain upon thy high places!
How are the mighty fallen!

Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the enemy triumph.

Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew,
Neither let there be rain upon you, neither fields of offerings:
For there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away,
The shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.
From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided.
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.
Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul;
Who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights,
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
How are the mighty fallen,
In the midst of the battle!

O Jonathan, slain upon thy high places,
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me:
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!"

DAVID SHOWS HIS GRATITUDE TO THE JABESH-GILEADITES

To make Judah a separate kingdom was a momentous step, involving new responsibility, with consequences not easily foreseen. David, therefore, properly submitted to the Lord for decision the question: "Shall I establish my capital as king of Judah?"

Now it came to pass after this, that David inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?"

And the Lord said to him, "Go up."

But David said, "Whither shall I go up?"

And the Lord said, "Unto Hebron."

So David went up thither, and his two wives also. And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household; and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

And they told David, saying, that the men of Jabesh-gilead were they that buried Saul.

So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said to them: "Blessed be ye of the Lord, that ye have showed this kindness to your lord, even to Saul, and have buried him. And now the Lord show kindness and truth to you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them."

DAVID THE KING

Abner Starts a Rebellion

Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. And David grew stronger and stronger; but the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.

(Abner, King Saul's chief of staff, endeavored to put Saul's son, Ish-bosheth, on the throne. Joab was David's nephew and his general in chief. He was an able soldier, whose loyalty to David was strong but cruel. He held a tournament with Abner, and afterwards treacherously slew him.)

Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim; and made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel. Ish-bosheth Saul's son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David.

Now Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met them together by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.

Then Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men now rise and fight before us."

And Joab said, "Let them rise."

Then there rose and went over by number, twelve for Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the men of David. And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called Field of the Knife-edges. And there was a very sore battle that day; and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the men of David.

DAMASCUS GATE, JERUSALEM
From an etching by E. M. Lilien

The most picturesque of all the gates in Jerusalem. While both it and the battlemented wall are modern, i.e., about five hundred years old, this gate stands on the site of a more ancient exit from which the great north road led to Samaria and Damascus.

The Death of Asahel

There were three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel was light of foot as a wild roe.

And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner.

Then Abner looked behind him, and said, "Art thou Asahel?"

And he answered, "I am."

Then Abner said to him, "Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his armor." But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him.

Again Abner said to Asahel, "Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?"

Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him under the fifth rib; and he fell down there, and died.

Abner Retreats

Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner; and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that lieth before Giah by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.

And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of a hill.

Then Abner called to Joab, and said, "Shall the sword devour forever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?"

And Joab said, "As God liveth, unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the morning the people had gone up every one from following his brother."

So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim.

And Joab returned from following Abner; and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel.

But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, so that three hundred and threescore men died.

And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulcher of his father, which was in Beth-lehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.

JOAB TREACHEROUSLY KILLS ABNER

Now Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying: "Ye sought for David in times past to be king over you: now then do it: for the Lord hath spoken of David, saying, 'By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies.'"

Abner also spoke in the ears of Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin. So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made Abner and the men that were with him a feast.

And Abner said to David, "I will rise and go, and will gather all Israel to my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth."

And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.

Then, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.

When Joab and all the host that was with him were come, they told Joab, saying, "Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace."

Then Joab came to the king, and said: "What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest."

When Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, who brought him back from the well of Sirah: but David knew it not. And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother.

And afterward when David heard it, he said, "I and my kingdom are guiltless before the Lord forever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner: let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house."

DAVID LAMENTS THE DEATH OF ABNER

And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, "Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner." And king David himself followed the bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept. And the king lamented over Abner, and said:

"Should Abner die as a fool dieth?
Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters:
As a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou."

Then all the people wept again over him.

And all the people came to cause David to eat food while it was yet day; but David swore, saying, "So do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or aught else, till the sun be down." And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them: as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people. So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner.

And the king said to his servants: "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah are too hard for me: the Lord shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness."

DAVID PUNISHES THE ASSASSINS OF ISH-BOSHETH

When Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were frightened. And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and

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POOL IN HEBRON

This large cistern lies in the midst of old Hebron near the khan where all the caravans for centuries have come. David chose this conspicuous spot in which to hang up the hands and feet of the murderers of Ishbosheth because he knew that these same caravans would carry the news of his swift justice to the four corners of Israel.

Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ish-bosheth, as he took his rest at noon. Now when they came into the house, as he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, they slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and got them away through the plain all night.

And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David to Hebron, and said to the king, "Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, who sought thy life; and the Lord hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his family."

And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them: "As the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, when one told me, saying, 'Behold, Saul is dead,' thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag; this was the reward I gave him for his tidings. How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed, shall I not now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?"

And David commanded his young men, and they slew them. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it in the sepulcher of Abner in Hebron.

David Is Crowned King of Israel as Well as Judah

Then came all the tribes of Israel to David to Hebron, and spoke, saying: "Behold we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee:

> 'Thou shalt be shepherd of my people Israel,
> And thou shalt be a prince over Israel.' "

So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them; and they anointed David king over Israel.

David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

JERUSALEM BECOMES "THE CITY OF DAVID"

And the king and his men went to Jerusalem to the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: who spoke to David, saying, "Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither": thinking, "David cannot come in hither."

Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion: the same is the city of David.

And David said on that day, "Whosoever getteth up to the water-course, and smiteth the Jebusites, he shall be chief and captain."

So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward.

TOWER OF DAVID, JERUSALEM

David probably had nothing to do with this tower although it bears his name. Solomon may have built the foundations, but the great stones that appear in this picture are the work of Herod preserved by Titus, when he destroyed the rest of the city, in order that future generations might know what a stronghold he had captured. The smaller upper story is the work of Arabs and Turks. For centuries this tower has been the stronghold of Jerusalem. It was from the entrance of this fortress that General Allenby caused his proclamation to be read, announcing peace to the city after its capture in the Great War.

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KIRIATH–JEARIM

This large village lies on the main road from Jaffa (Joppa) to Jerusalem. It is the successor of the ancient village in which the Ark passed its twenty years of exile. The Crusaders built here a church to Jeremiah, thinking erroneously that this was Jeremiah's native village, Anathoth. David's resolve to rescue the sacred Ark had most far-reaching consequences. It involved a campaign in which thirty thousand men were used to clear the Philistines from the hills west of Jerusalem. David had no intention of making Jerusalem in any sense the one center of worship. But we can now see that this act was the first of a long series making Jerusalem the Holy City of the Jews, then of the Christians, then of the Moslems.

So David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him.

And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David a house.

And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.

THE ARK BROUGHT TO JERUSALEM

Misfortunes Cause Delay

The tent of meeting and the ark had been first at Shiloh and then at Baale-judah, more commonly known as Kiriath-jearim, all these years.

And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled themselves together at Shiloh, and set up the tent of meeting there. And the men of Kiriath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the Lord,[33] and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord.

And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kiriath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

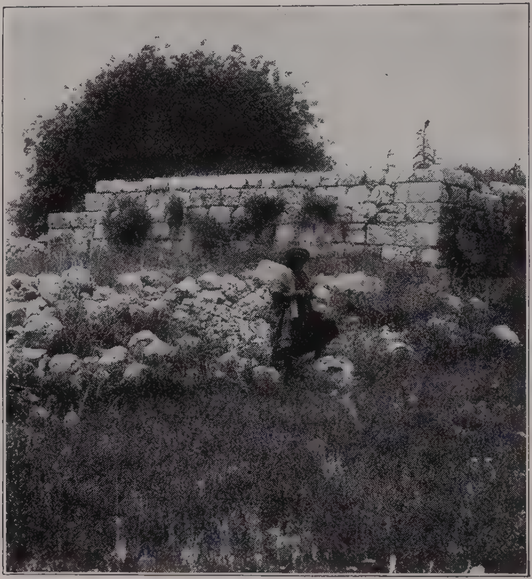
And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader. And David said to all the congregation of Israel: "If it seem good to you, and that it be of the Lord our God, let us send abroad to our brethren everywhere, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves to us: and let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we inquired not at it in the days of Saul."

And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

So David rose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale-judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubim.

And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio the sons of Abinadab drove the new cart. And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.



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SHILOH

This rocky valley, surrounded by rockier hills, has lain desolate almost since the days when the Philistines captured the Ark and destroyed Shiloh. Somewhere in this vicinity the Tabernacle was pitched, here Eli and his sons ministered and here the youthful Samuel first heard the voice of Jehovah. The memory of the prophet is kept alive by the sacred tree on which the peasants still tie their petitions and their votive offerings.

When they came to Nachon's threshing-floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

Now David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place

Perez-uzzah [Breach of Uzzah] to this day. And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, "How shall the ark of the Lord come to me?" So David would not remove the ark of the Lord to him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.

Now it was told king David, saying, "The Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

And it was so, that when they that bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.

The King's Dancing Displeases His Queen

Then David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

And they brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts. And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, both to men and women, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed every one to his house.

Then David returned to bless his household.

And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, who uncovered himself today in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!"

Then David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel: therefore will I play before the Lord."

And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

THE CONQUESTS OF DAVID

His Prowess Wins Him Supremacy

And he smote Moab. So the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute. David smote also Hadadezer, and David took from him a thousand chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen. And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succor Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

Then David put garrisons in Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought tribute. And the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.

When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer, then Toi sent Joram his son to king David, to salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi. And Joram brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass: which also king David did dedicate to the Lord, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued.

And David got him a name when he returned from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of Salt, being eighteen thousand men.

And he put garrisons throughout all Edom, and all they of Edom became David's servants. The Lord preserved David whithersoever he went. And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice to all his people.

And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; and Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Seraiah was the scribe; and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers.

David's Messengers Are Despised

It came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead.

Then said David, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash as his father showed kindness to me." And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon.

And the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun their lord: "Thinkest thou that David doth honor thy father, that he hath sent comforters to thee? hath not David rather sent his servants to thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?"

Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one-half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, and sent them away.

When they told it to David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, "Tarry at Jericho until your beards are grown, and then return."

David Sends Joab Against the Ammonites

When the children of Ammon saw that they were become odious to David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zobah, twenty thousand footmen, and the king of Maacah with a thousand men, and the men of Tob, twelve thousand men.

When David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men.

And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and the Syrians of Zobah and of Rehob, and the men of Tob and Maacah, were by themselves in the field.

When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians: and the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put them in array against the children of Ammon.

And he said: "If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the Lord do that which seemeth him good."

So Joab and the people that were with him drew nigh to the battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him. And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise fled before Abishai, and entered into the city. Then Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.

And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there were precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city.

David Wars with Giants

And it came to pass after this, that there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines: at which time Sibbecai the Hushathite slew Sippai, that was of the children of the giant: and they were subdued.

And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spearstaff was like a weaver's beam.

And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were four and twenty, six on each hand, and six on each foot: and he also was the son of the giant. But when he defied Israel, Jonathan, the son of Shimea David's brother, slew him.

These were born to the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

The Syrians Fail to Save the Ammonites

When the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together.

And Hadadezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the river; and they came to Helam: and Shobach the captain of the host of Hadadezer went before them.

When it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him.

And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there.

And when all the kings that were servants to Hadadezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more.

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THE VALLEY OF REPHAIM

This broad plain lies on the top of the great central ridge of Palestine about two miles southwest of Jerusalem. In this picture you may see against the sky the tower on the summit of Olivet, a little to the left the huge German hospice also on Olivet, and some of the houses and churches of the Holy City itself. In this plain David won his two great victories over the Philistines. The first time he captured their gods, and the second time he drove them out of the highlands. He thus laid the foundations of Hebrew independence.

And it came to pass, at the return of the year, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon.

And David went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance. So David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

David Twice Defeats the Philistines

Now the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

And David inquired of God, saying, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into my hand?"

And the Lord said to him, "Go up; for I will deliver them into thy hand."

So they came up to Baal-perazim; and David smote them there.

Then David said, "God hath broken in upon mine enemies by my hand like the breaking forth of waters." Therefore they called the name of that place Baal-perazim [The Place of Breakings-forth].

And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire.

And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.

Therefore David inquired again of God; and God said to him: "Go not up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines."

David therefore did as God commanded him; and they smote the host of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gezer.

And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations.

And the Philistines had war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David grew faint. And Ishbi-benob, who was of the sons of the giants, the weight of whose spear was three hundred shekels of brass, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David. But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succored him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him.

Then the men of David swore to him, saying, "Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the lamp of Israel."

DAVID'S RELATIONS WITH SAUL'S DESCENDANTS

A Mother's Heroic Devotion

Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David inquired of the Lord.

And the Lord answered, "It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites."

Wherefore David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord?"

And they answered the king: "The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the borders of Israel, let seven men of his sons be

ABISHAI SAVING THE LIFE OF DAVID
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

delivered to us, and we will hang them up to the Lord in Gibeah of Saul, whom the Lord did choose."

And the king said, "I will give them."

RIZPAH

From a painting by Sir Frederick Leighton

The gruesomeness of this offering of the Gibeonites to Jehovah, is redeemed by the courage and devotion of Rizpah, mother of these victims. Through the heat of the harvest period this intrepid woman defended her loved ones from the prowling beasts of the field and the hovering fowls of the air, her only weapon the sickle with which she was wont to reap the fields.

Then the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel the son of Barzillai; and he gave them into the hand of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the hill before the Lord. And they fell all seven together; and they were put to death in the first days of harvest, in the beginning of barley harvest.

And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for herself upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and she suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night. And it was told David what Rizpah had done.

And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa. And he brought up thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged. And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son they buried in the land of Benjamin in Zela, in the sepulcher of Kish his father.

David Is Kind to the Lame Prince

And David said, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

Now there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him to David, the king said to him, "Art thou Ziba?"

And he said, "Thy servant is he."

Then the king said, "Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?"

And Ziba said to the king, "Jonathan hath yet a son, who is lame in his feet."

And the king said to him, "Where is he?"

And Ziba said to the king, "Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar."

Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come to David, he fell upon his face, and did reverence.

And David said, "Mephibosheth."

And he answered, "Behold thy servant!"

And David said to him, "Fear not: for I will surely show thee kindness for the sake of Jonathan thy father; and I will restore to thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually."

And he bowed himself and said, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look on such a dead dog as I am?"

Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him: "I have given to thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house. Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat; but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread always at my table."

Then said Ziba to the king, "According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do."

"As for Mephibosheth," said the king, "he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons."

And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Micha.

Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants to Mephibosheth. So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem; for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet.

DAVID'S COWARDLY SIN

URIAH PROVES HIS LOYALTY

And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David rose from his couch, and walked upon the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and inquired after the woman. And they said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him.

And David sent to Joab saying, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David.

And when Uriah was come to him, David asked of him how Joab did, and how the people fared, and how the war prospered. And David said to Uriah, "Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet." And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a present of food from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his own house.

Now when they had told David, saying, "Uriah went not down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Camest thou not from thy journey? Why then didst thou not go down unto thy house?"

And Uriah said to David: "The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; and shall I go into my house, to eat and to drink? As thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing."

Then David said to Uriah, "Tarry here today also, and tomorrow I will let thee depart."

So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day and the morrow. And David called him, and he ate and drank before him;

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A STREET IN JERUSALEM

This view is typical of all the larger cities of Palestine. Houses of stone, streets narrow, crooked, and at various levels, the sun of summer kept out either by straggling awnings of burlap or by the vaultings that unite the second stories of the buildings. The bazaars and workshops are like caves, lighted only by their entrance. The crowds come and go all day. Now and then a caravan of camels shuffles past, the huge bales of their cargo quite filling the narrow lane. Townsmen, countrymen, Bedouins and pilgrims from foreign parts jostle one another promiscuously in the swarming street. And so from earliest days have they always jostled each other.

and he made him drunk. And at evening he went out, to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but he went not down to his own house.

David Betrays an Honorable Man

And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, "Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from behind him, that he may be smitten, and die."

And it came to pass, when Joab watched the city, that he put Uriah in the place where he knew that valiant men were. And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab. And there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; and charged the messenger, saying: "When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war to the king, and if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say to thee: 'Wherefore approached ye so nigh to the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall?' then say thou, 'Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'"

So the messenger went, and came and showed David all that Joab had sent him for.

And the messenger said to David: "Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out to us into the field, and we were upon them even to the entering of the gate. And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants are dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also." Then David said to the messenger: "Thus shalt thou say to Joab, 'Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it': and encourage thou him."

When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house. And she became his wife, and a son was born to them. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

A Prophet Rebukes a King

And the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he came to him, and said to him: "There were two men in one city: the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had very many flocks and herds: but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up. And it grew up together with him, and with his children: it ate of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was to him as a daughter. And there came a traveler to the rich man. And he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him."

And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. And he said to Nathan, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this shall surely die. And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

Then Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man.

"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: 'I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house; and I gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given to thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife; and him thou hast slain with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.'"

And David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

And Nathan said to David: "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to thee shall surely die."

And Nathan departed to his house.

David Mourns for His Dying Child

And the child that Uriah's wife bore unto David became very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house rose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died.

And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, "Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spoke to him, and he hearkened not to our voice: how will he then do himself some harm, if we tell him that the child is dead?"

But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: and David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?"

And they said, "He is dead."

Then David rose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshiped. Then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he ate.

Then said his servants to him, "What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread."

And he said, "While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, 'Who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

And David comforted Bath-sheba his wife. And she had another son, and he called his name Solomon [Peace]: and the Lord loved him. And God sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah [Beloved of the Lord], for the Lord's sake.

DAVID

He played with lions as with kids,
And with bears as with lambs of the flock.
In his youth did he not slay a giant,
And take away reproach from the people,
When he lifted up his hand with a sling stone,
And beat down the boasting of Goliath?
For he called upon the Lord Most High;
And he gave him strength in his right hand,
To slay a man mighty in war,
To exalt the horn of his people.

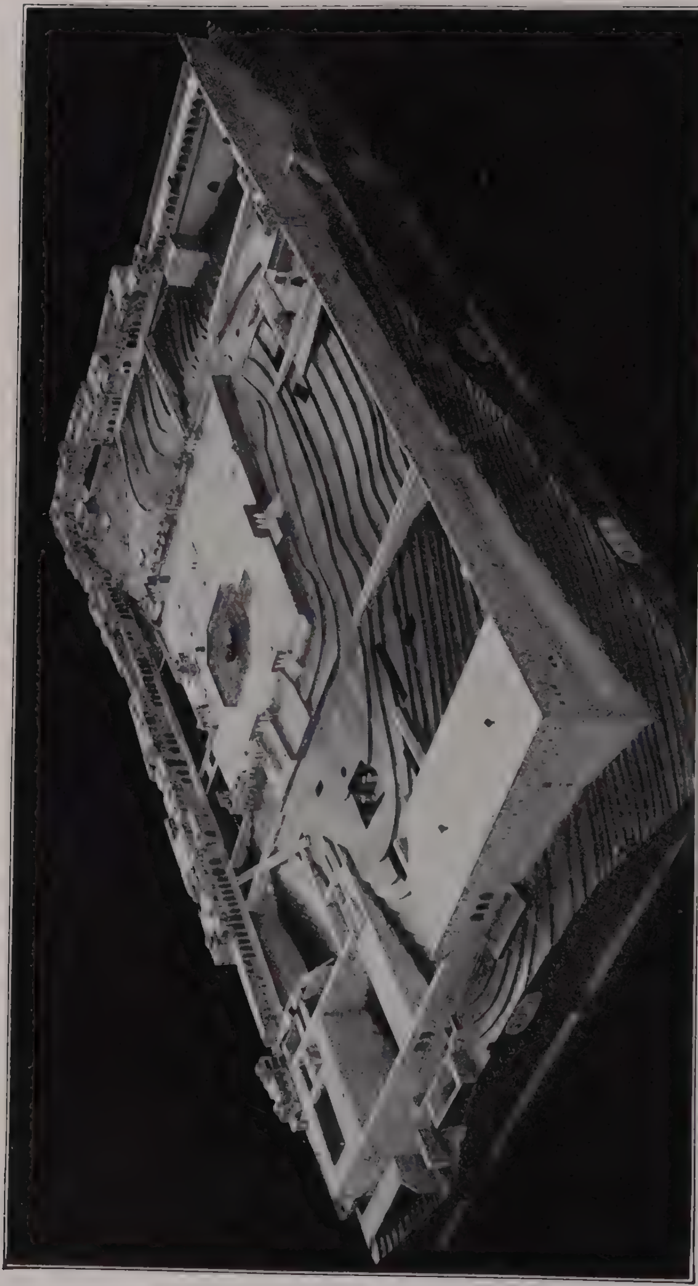
So they glorified him for his "ten thousands,"
And praised him in the blessings of the Lord.
There was given him a diadem of glory;
For he destroyed the enemies on every side,
And brought to nought the Philistines his adversaries,
And broke their horn in pieces, unto this day.

In all his works he praised the Holy One,
And sang to the Most High with words of glory;
With his whole heart he sang songs,
And loved him that made him.
Also he set singers before the altar,
To make sweet melody by their voices.

He gave dignity to the feasts,
And set in order the seasons to perfection,
That they might praise his holy name,
And the sanctuary sounded from early morning.

The Lord took away his sins,
And exalted his horn forever;
And gave him a covenant of kings,
And a throne of glory in Israel.

—From "The Praise of Famous Men," by Sirach



MOUNT MORIAH, ORIGINAL CONTOURS

From a model by Schick

MOUNT MORIAH, ORIGINAL CONTOURS

We have here the photograph of a unique model constructed from wood by a Mr. Schick, a German architect of the last century who made Jerusalem his home and the object of his devoted study. The model is so constructed that the buildings may easily be removed and others of a different period substituted for them. In the present picture not only have the buildings been removed but also most of the pavements on which the buildings rest. Even the loose earth has been taken away and we see before us the naked rock of Mount Moriah, not quite as it lies in fact beneath the Temple area, but built in layers that correspond with the level contour lines made by the surveyors of the Palestine Exploration Fund. Each layer represents approximately a yard of thickness.

When Solomon endeavored to enlarge the city, he could build only northward because of the steep valleys on either side. His new buildings therefore invaded this new area, climbing the hill in the process; his Temple stood on the crest of Mount Moriah slightly to the left of the octagonal black patch. That is why the Bible always speaks of "going up" to the House of Jehovah, and of the "ascent by which he went up to the House of Jehovah," which so astonished the Queen of Sheba. This black patch marks the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, where David saw the angel of the pestilence with the drawn sword. From David's day to the present it has been a sacred spot either to the Jew, the Roman, the Mohammedan or the Christian—truly a wonderful fact.

On the site marked by the black patch now stands the graceful Dome of the Rock, covering what was once the bare, rocky top of this historic hill.

When Herod enlarged the area for his new and magnificent Temple, he had to build huge retaining walls east and west of the sacred mount, and then fill in the intervening spaces with vaultings in order to construct the level platform for his courts and colonnades. The vaulted structures are known as Solomon's Stables. To the right of these vaultings the space is filled solidly with earth, so that this huge area, which is one-fifth of the total area of the city, is almost as level as a floor. Near the center of this area one may see the secondary terrace, perhaps fifteen feet high, which was constructed to hold the courts that surrounded the sacred building itself.

The extreme farther corner (northwest) was crowned by a fortress called the Tower of Antonia. This fortress quite dominated the Temple and was the seat of that strong Roman guard whose duty it was to keep the peace among the turbulent Jews on the great feast days.

One other feature worthy of mention is the various rectangular cuttings in the rock. They are cisterns, the waters of which were useful in time of siege and were daily drawn upon for purposes of purification during the service in the Temple.

DAVID'S PLANS FOR THE TEMPLE

"Thy Son Shall Build a House for My Name"

Now it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies; that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains."

And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in thy heart; for the Lord is with thee."

And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying: "Go and tell my servant David: 'Thus saith the Lord: Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in? whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.' Now therefore so shalt thou say to my servant David: 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like the name of the great men that are in the earth.

"'When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy son after thee, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever.'"

According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak to David.

David Prepares the Materials for Building

Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far?

"And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?

"What can David say more to thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant. For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them. Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

"And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemest to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? for thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee forever: and thou, Lord, art become their God.

"And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it forever, and do as thou hast said. And let thy name be magnified forever, saying, 'The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel': and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee.

"For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, 'I will build thee a house': therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

"And now, O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words are truth and thou hast promised this goodness to thy servant: therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue forever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed forever."

And David appointed masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God. And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight; and cedar trees in abundance: for the Sidonians and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David. For David said: "Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it."

David Purchases the Temple Site

Later in the history, we are told that David, having trespassed against God, bought the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite in Jerusalem, and built there, as a votive offering, an altar to the Lord. It is believed that this became, later, the site of the great altar before the temple.

Then David spoke to the Lord when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house."

And Gad came that day to David, and said to him, "Go up, rear an altar to the Lord in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite."

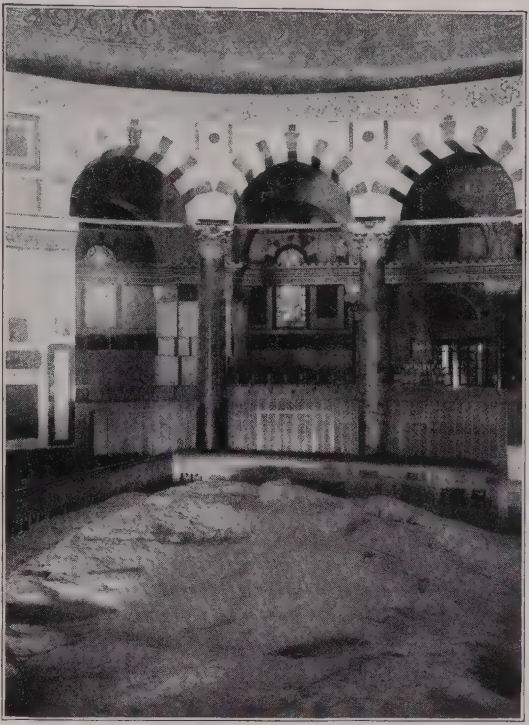
And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the Lord commanded.

And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground. And Araunah said, "Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant?"

And David said, "To buy the threshing-floor of thee, to build an altar to the Lord, that the plague may be stayed from the people."

And Araunah said to David: "Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good to him: behold, here are oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood. All these things, O king, doth Araunah give to the king." And Araunah said to the king, "The Lord thy God accept thee."

And the king said to Araunah, "Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And David built there an altar to the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.



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DOME OF THE ROCK, JERUSALEM

The rock is in the foreground, the naked tawny summit of Mount Moriah. On it in Solomon's day stood the brazen altar of burnt offering. Over it today rises the most graceful and most richly adorned shrine in the Near East, the work of the Arab conquerors.

Solomon Is Proclaimed Builder of the Temple

And David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem.

Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said: "Hear me, my brethren, and my people: as for me, I had in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building: but God said to me, 'Thou shalt not build a house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood.'

"Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever: for he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler; and of the house of Judah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel: and of all my sons, (for the Lord hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.

"And he said to me, 'Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts; for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. Moreover I will establish his kingdom forever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day.'

"Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the Lord, and in the hearing of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God: that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you forever."

David Commits the Sacred Task to His Son

"And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth

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THE THRESHING-FLOOR
From a painting by James Clark

all the imaginations of the thoughts. If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.

"Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build a house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it."

Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasures thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner chambers thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things.

And David said to Solomon his son: "Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed, for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord."

ABSALOM'S CONSPIRACY

Absalom Is the King's Favorite Son

In all Israel there was none to be so much praised as the king's son Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. And when he cut the hair of his head (now it was at every year's end that he cut it; because the hair was heavy on him, therefore he cut it); he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels, after the king's weight.

(When Absalom killed one of his own brothers, for what seemed to him a sufficient cause, he was of course obliged to flee for his life.)

Now Absalom fled, and went to Talmai the son of the king of Geshur, and was there three years. But David mourned for his son every day, and the soul of David longed to go forth to Absalom.

Joab, desiring, for his own purposes, to have Absalom reconciled to his father, engaged a shrewd woman to tell the king a story that should influence David to reinstate his son.

A Woman's Parable Influences the King

Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom. And Joab sent to Tekoa, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said to her: "I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead: and come to the king, and speak on this manner to him." So Joab put the words in her mouth.

Now when the woman of Tekoa spoke to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, "Help, O king!" And the king said, "What aileth thee?"

And she answered: "I am indeed a widow woman, and my husband is dead. And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and there was none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him. And, behold, the whole family is risen against thy handmaid, and they said, 'Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also.' And so they shall quench my coal which is left, and shall leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon the earth."

Then the king said to the woman, "Go to thy house, and I will give charge concerning thee."

And the woman of Tekoa said to the king: "My lord, O king, the iniquity be on me, and on my father's house: and the king and his throne be guiltless."

And the king said, "Whosoever saith aught unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more."

Then said she, "I pray thee, let the king remember the Lord thy God, that thou wouldst not suffer the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son."

And he said, "As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth."

Then the woman said, "Let thy handmaid, I pray thee, speak one word to my lord the king."

And he said, "Say on."

And the woman said: "Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one who is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished. For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person; yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him. Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing to my lord the king, it is because the people have made me afraid: and thy handmaid said: 'I will now speak to the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid. For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.' Then thy handmaid said, 'The word of my lord the king shall now be for rest: for as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad'; therefore the Lord thy God will be with thee."

David Restores Absalom to His Favor

Then the king answered and said to the woman, "Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee."

And the woman said, "Let my lord the king now speak."

And the king said, "Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?"

And the woman answered and said: "As thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from aught that my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of thy handmaid: to change the face of the matter hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth."

Then the king said to Joab, "Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again."

And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the king: and Joab said, "Today thy servant knoweth that I have found favor in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant."

So Joab rose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

And the king said, "Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face." So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face.

And to Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter, whose name was Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance.

Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and he saw not the king's face. Then Absalom sent for Joab, to send him to the king; but he would not come to him: and he sent again a second time, but he would not come. Therefore he said to his servants, "See, Joab's field is near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire." And Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

Then Joab rose, and came to Absalom to his house, and said to him, "Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?"

And Absalom answered Joab: "Behold, I sent to thee, saying, 'Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? it were better for me to be there still.' Now therefore let me see the king's face; and if there be iniquity in me, let him kill me."

So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king kissed Absalom.

Absalom Plots Against His Father

And it came to pass after this that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a suit came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called to him, and said, "Of what city art thou?"

And he said, "Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel."

And Absalom said to him, "See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man appointed of the king to hear thee." Absalom said moreover, "Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man who hath any suit or cause might come to me, and I would do him justice!"

And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

Now it came to pass at the end of four years, that Absalom said to the king, "I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the Lord, in Hebron."

And the king said to him, "Go in peace."

So he rose, and went to Hebron. But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, 'Absalom reigneth in Hebron.'"

And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were invited; and they went in their simplicity; and they knew not anything. And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city, even from

Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.

Then there came a messenger to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom."

And David said to all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, "Rise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart! lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword."

And the king's servants said to the king, "Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall choose."

The King Flees for His Life

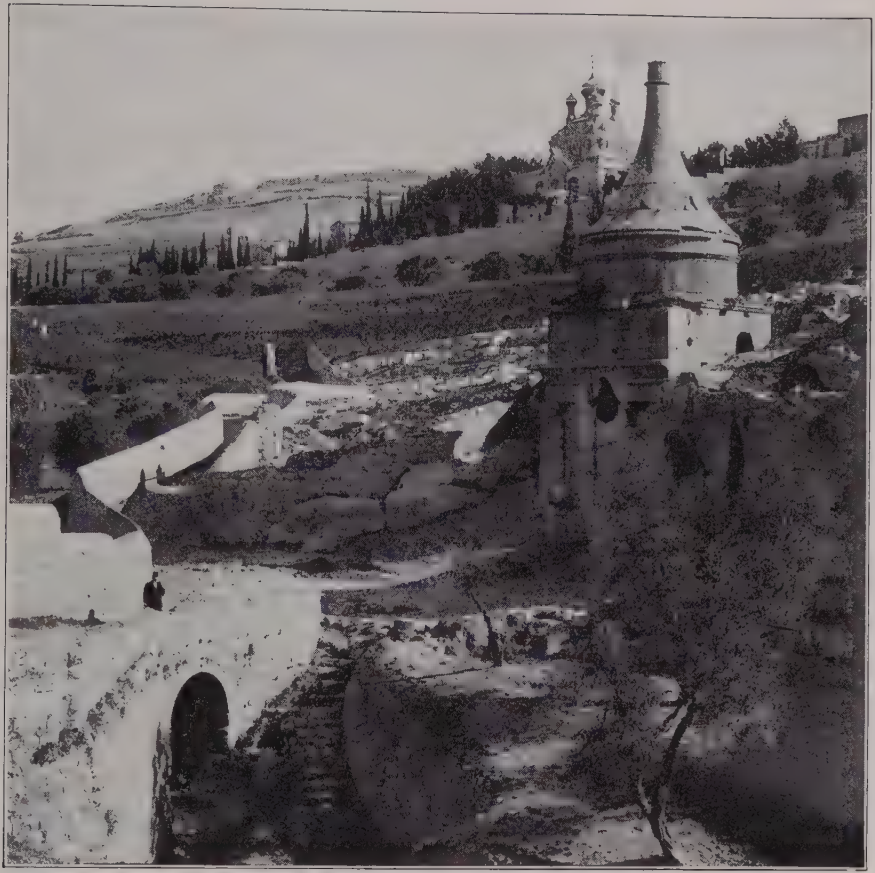
Then the king went forth, and all his household after him, and tarried in a place that was far off. And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite: "Wherefore goest thou also with us? return, and remain with the king: for thou art a foreigner, and also an exile. Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I today make thee go up and down with us, seeing that I go whither I may? Return thou, and take back thy brethren. Mercy and truth be with thee!"

And Ittai answered the king, and said, "As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, there also will thy servant be."

And David said to Ittai, "Go, and pass over."

And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him. And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way to the wilderness.



BRIDGE OVER THE BROOK KIDRON

There is no brook except after heavy rains, but the Valley of the Kidron still crowds down between the Mount of Olives and Jerusalem. You are facing northeast. The hill to the right is Olivet. The nearer structure is the so-called tomb of Absalom. The conspicuous building with the domes is the Russian church of Mary Magdalene. The garden of Gethsemane is just off the picture to the left.

And lo, Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city.

And the king said to Zadok: "Carry back the ark of God to the city. If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back, and show me both it, and his habitation. Behold here am I; let him do to me as seemeth good to him."

David Has a Friend in Need

The king said also to Zadok, the priest: "Art not thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me."

Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.

And one told David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom."

And David said, "O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshiped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head: to whom David said: "If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden to me: but if thou return to the city, and say to Absalom, 'I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant'; then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel. And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar, the priests? therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send to me everything that ye can hear."

So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.

A Servant Slanders His Master

When David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and a hundred bunches of raisins, and a hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine.

And the king said to Ziba, "What meanest thou by these?"

And Ziba said, "The asses are for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink."

And the king said, "And where is thy master's son?"

And Ziba said to the king, "Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, 'Today will the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father.'"

Then said the king to Ziba, "Behold, thine are all that pertained to Mephibosheth."

And Ziba said, "I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king."

The King Answers Curses with Mercy

And when David the king came to Bahurim, behold there came out thence a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera. He came out, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people, and all the mighty men, were on his right hand and on his left. And thus said Shimei while he cursed: "Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou wicked man. The Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art now in thy calamity, because thou art a bloody man."

Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head."

And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, "Behold, my son seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse. It may be that God will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day."

And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hillside over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust. And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary to the Jordan; and they refreshed themselves there.

Absalom Is Betrayed into a Foolish Delay

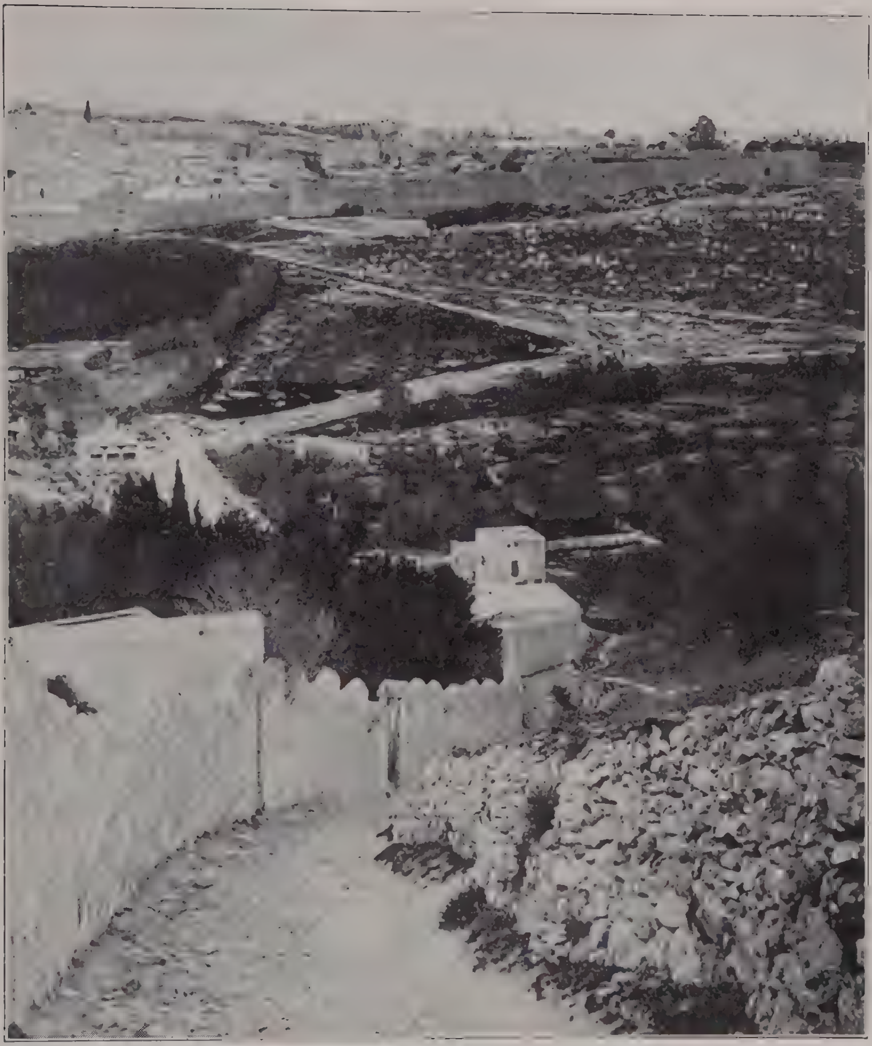
And Absalom, and all the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, "God save the king! God save the king!"

And Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend?"

And Hushai said to Absalom: "Nay; but whom this people, and all the men of Israel choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide. And again, whom do I serve? do I not serve his son? as I have served in thy father's presence, so will I serve in thy presence."

Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, "Give counsel among you what we shall do."

And Ahithophel said to Absalom: "Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will rise and pursue after David this night: and I will come upon him while he is weary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people that are with him shall flee; and I will smite the king only: and I will bring back all the people to thee (the man whom thou seekest is as if all returned): so all the people shall be in peace." And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.



Photograph by Brown Bros.

JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

At the foot of this steep bank on the left is the Garden of Gethsemane. Where the road turns to the right beyond the trees, is the bridge over the Kidron. The path that turns sharply to the left in the middle of the picture, leads to St. Stephen's gate. In David's time Jerusalem lay wholly to the left, and even in Christ's time this portion of the city did not exist. Jerusalem has been fondly associated with the name of David ever since his capture of it from the Jebusites. David recognized the impregnability of its defenses, and cleverly ordered his men to gain entrance by the drain which led underground into the city. Thus the city was taken. As late as 1834, when Jerusalem was besieged in the revolt against Ibrahim Pasha, the besiegers gained entrance in this same way through a drain.

Then said Absalom, "Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith."

And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him, saying, "Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do after his saying? if not, speak thou."

And Hushai said to Absalom: "The counsel that Ahithophel hath given is not good at this time. For," said Hushai, "thou knowest thy father and his men, that they be mighty men, and they are fierce of spirit, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people. Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some other place; and it will come to pass, when some of them be fallen at the first, that whosoever heareth it will say, 'There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom.' And he also that is valiant, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy father is a mighty man, and they who are with him are valiant men.

"Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered together to thee, from Dan to Beer-sheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go thyself in their midst. So shall we come upon him as the dew falleth on the ground: and of him and of all the men that are with him we will not leave so much as one. Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found there."

And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel!" For the Lord had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that evil might come upon Absalom.

When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and rose, and got him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulcher of his father.

This decision, of course, cost Absalom his only chance to overwhelm his father, when he was exhausted of resources, and gave the wise old warrior time to rally his forces.

David's Friends Give Him Warning

Then said Hushai to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests: "Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counseled. Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, 'Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that are with him.'"

Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by En-rogel; for they might not be seen to come into the city: and a girl went and told them: and they went and told king David.

Nevertheless, a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in Bahurim, who had a well in his court; whither they went down.

And the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground grain thereon; and the thing was not known.

And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?"

And the woman said to them, "They are gone over the brook of water." And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

Then it came to pass, after they were departed, that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David, and said to David, "Rise, and pass quickly over the water! for thus hath Ahithophel counseled against you."

Then David rose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. So Israel and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.

David Prepares His Army for Battle

And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, brought beds, and basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched grain, and beans, and lentils, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, "The people are hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness."

And David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite.

And the king said to the people, "I will surely go forth with you myself also."

But the people said: "Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but thou art worth ten thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou be ready to succor us out of the city."

Then the king said to them, "What seemeth you best I will do." And the king stood by the gate-side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands.

David Desires Mercy for His Ungrateful Son

And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even

Published by arrangement with George D. Sproul

DAVID'S FLIGHT

From a painting by Rochegrosse

with Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.

So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim; for the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom was riding upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went on.

And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, "Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak."

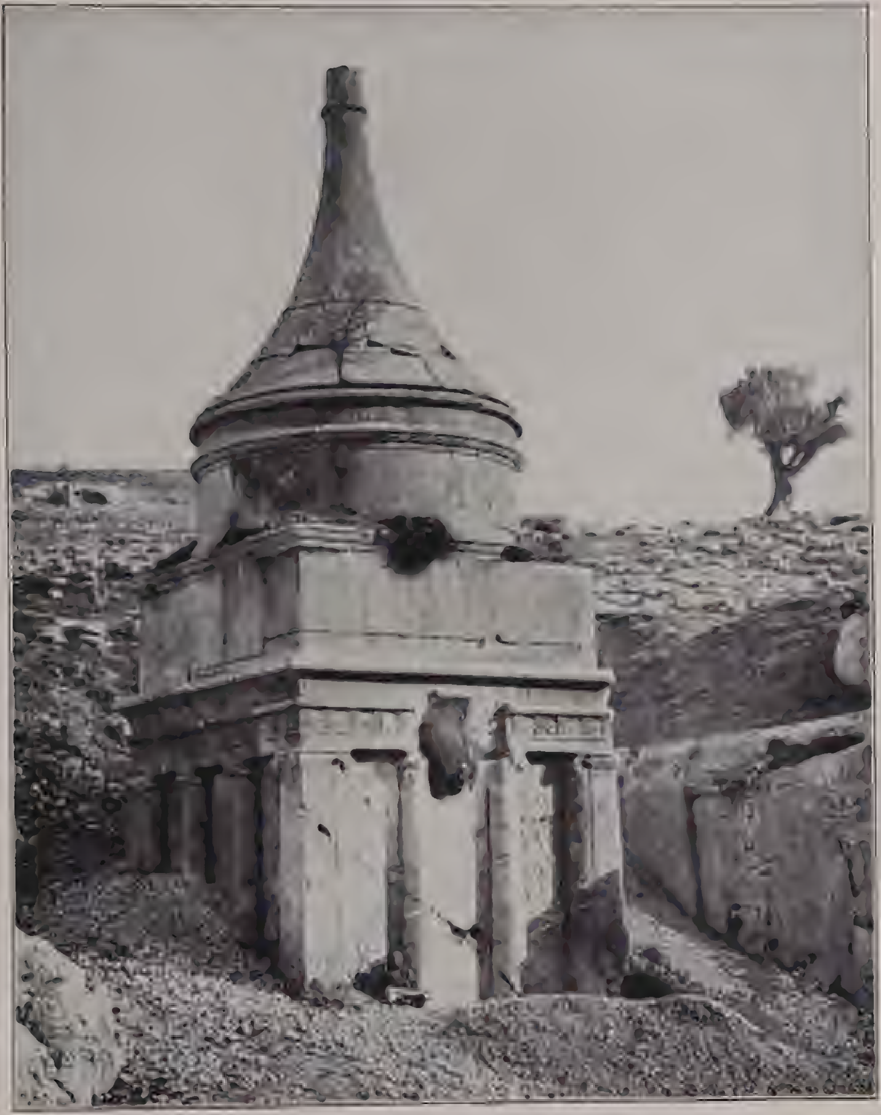
And Joab said to the man that told him, "And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle."

And the man said to Joab: "Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in my hand, yet would I not put forth my hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, 'Beware that none touch the young man Absalom.' Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldst have set thyself against me."

DAVID LEARNS THE FATE OF ABSALOM

Then said Joab, "I may not tarry thus with thee." And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.

Then they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.



THE "TOMB OF ABSALOM"

This structure, partly hewed from the native rock and partly built of masonry, belongs to late Jewish times, but serves to preserve the memory of Absalom, David's ungrateful son. It is the custom of passersby to show their contempt for Absalom by throwing a stone through the hole in the middle of the structure. But after this lapse of time, we can make some allowance for the slighted eldest son. No doubt the open secret, that David intended to put Solomon on the throne, goaded Absalom on to his desperate venture.

(Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance": and he called the pillar after his own name. And it is called to this day, "Absalom's Place.")

Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, "Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the Lord hath avenged him of his enemies."

And Joab said to him, "Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day: because the king's son is dead."

Then said Joab to the Cushite, "Go tell the king what thou hast seen."

And the Cushite bowed himself to Joab, and ran.

Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, "But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after the Cushite."

And Joab said, "Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready?"

"But howsoever," said he, "let me run."

And he said to him, "Run."

Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran the Cushite.

And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate to the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, a man running alone. And the watchman cried, and told the king.

Then the king said, "If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth."

And he came apace, and drew near. And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called to the porter, and said, "Behold, another man running alone."

And the king said, "He also bringeth tidings."

And the watchman said, "I think the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok."

And the king said, "He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings."

Then Ahimaaz called, and said to the king, "All is well."

And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, "Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king."

But the king said, "Is the young man Absalom safe?"

And Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was." And the king said to him, "Turn aside, and stand here." And he turned aside, and stood still.

And, behold, the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, "Tidings, my lord the king: for the Lord hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee." But the king said to the Cushite, "Is the young man Absalom safe?"

And the Cushite answered, "The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is."

And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

"Alas, my noble boy! that thou shouldst die—
Thou who wert made so beautifully fair!
That death should settle in thy glorious eye,
And leave his stillness in this clustering hair!
How could he mark thee for the silent tomb,
My proud boy, Absalom? . . .

"And now, farewell! 'tis hard to give thee up,
With death so like a gentle slumber on thee;
And thy dark sin!—Oh, I could drink the cup,
If from this woe its bitterness had won thee.
May God have called thee, like a wanderer, home,
My lost boy, Absalom!"

—*Nathaniel Parker Willis*

THE CHAMBER OVER THE GATE

Is it so far from thee
Thou canst no longer see
In the Chamber over the Gate
That old man desolate,
Weeping and wailing sore
For his son, who is no more?
O Absalom, my son!

Is it so long ago
That cry of human woe
From the walled city came,
Calling on his dear name,
That it has died away
In the distance of today?
O Absalom, my son!

There is no far nor near,
There is neither there nor here,
There is neither soon nor late,
In that Chamber over the Gate,
Nor any long ago
To that cry of human woe,
O Absalom, my son!

From the ages that are past
The voice comes like a blast,
Over seas that wreck and drown,
Over tumult of traffic and town;
And from ages yet to be
Come the echoes back to me,
O Absalom, my son!

Somewhere at every hour
The watchman on the tower
Looks forth, and sees the fleet
Approach of the hurrying feet
Of messengers, that bear
The tidings of despair.
O Absalom, my son!

He goes forth from the door,
Who shall return no more.
With him our joy departs;
The light goes out in our hearts;
In the Chamber over the Gate
We sit disconsolate.
O Absalom, my son!

That 'tis a common grief
Bringeth but slight relief;
Ours is the bitterest loss,
Ours is the heaviest cross;
And forever the cry will be,
"Would God I had died for thee,
O Absalom, my son!"

—*Henry W. Longfellow*

DAVID MOURNING OVER ABSALOM
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

DAVID'S RETURN TO HIS CAPITAL

Joab Rebukes His King

It was told Joab, "Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom."

And the victory that day was turned into mourning to all the people; for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son. And the people got them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Then Joab came into the house to the king, and said: "Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, who this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives; in that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends. For thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. Now therefore rise, go forth, and speak comfortingly to thy servants: for I swear by the Lord, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night; and that will be worse to thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now."

Then the king rose, and sat in the gate. And they told to all the people, saying, "Behold, the king doth sit in the gate." And all the people came before the king; for Israel had fled every man to his tent.

The People Seek David's Return

And all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying: "The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom. And

Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?"

And king David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying: "Speak to the elders of Judah, saying, 'Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house. Ye are my brethren, ye are my bone and my flesh: wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king?' And say ye to Amasa, 'Art thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the place of Joab!'"

And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man; so that they sent this word to the king, "Return thou, and all thy servants." So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.

The King Asserts His Authority

And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, who was of Bahurim, hastened and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David. And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king.

And there went over a ferryboat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good.

And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan; and said to the king: "Let not my lord impute iniquity to me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart. For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king."

But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord's anointed?"

And David said: "What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries to me? shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I am this day king over Israel?"

Therefore the king said to Shimei, "Thou shalt not die." And the king swore to him.

DAVID'S TWO FAITHFUL FRIENDS

THE LAME PRINCE REMAINS LOYAL TO THE KING

Ziba, who had been put in charge of Mephibosheth, the lame prince, had deceived his master, and gone to David and told him that Mephibosheth had stayed behind to start a rebellion. This was not true, and Mephibosheth took the first opportunity to show David his sympathy and devotion.

Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king; and he had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace.

And it came to pass, when he came to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, "Wherefore wentest thou not with me, Mephibosheth?"

And he answered: "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me; for thy servant said, 'I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king; because thy servant is lame.' And he hath slandered thy servant to my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in thine eyes. For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king: yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right therefore have I yet to cry any more to the king?"

And the king said to him, "Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I say, 'Thou and Ziba divide the land.'"

Then Mephibosheth said to the king, "Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come in peace to his own house."

The Aged Barzillai Shows His Devotion

Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim; and he went over the Jordan with the king, to conduct him back over Jordan. Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the king with sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very rich man.

And the king said to Barzillai, "Come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem."

And Barzillai said to the king: "How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? I am this day fourscore years old: can I discern between good and bad? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden to my lord the king? Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king; and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward? Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, by the grave of my father and my mother. But behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good to thee."

And the king answered, "Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good to thee; and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, that will I do for thee."

And all the people went over Jordan, and the king went over; and the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned to his own place.

So the king went over to Gilgal, and Chimham went over with him: and all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel.

THE FUTILE REBELLION OF SHEBA

Joab Assassinates the King's Nephew

Now there happened to be there a base fellow, whose name was Sheba, a Benjamite; and he blew a trumpet, and said:

"We have no part in David,
Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse.
Every man to his tents, O Israel!"

So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri; but the men of Judah clave to their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.

(Amasa, David's nephew, had been appointed by Absalom the commander-in-chief of his army of rebellion. After Joab had killed Absalom, the king forgave Amasa, and in anger against Joab, appointed him Joab's successor. Joab was glad for the pretext to take Amasa's life.)

Then said the king to Amasa, "Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here present."

So Amasa went to assemble the men of Judah; but he tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him.

And David said to Abishai, "Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than did Absalom: take thou thy lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities, and escape us."

Then there went out after him Joab's men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

When they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded to him, and upon it a girdle with a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out.

And Joab said to Amasa, "Art thou in health, my brother?" And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand; so he smote him therewith in the fifth rib; and he died.

And one of Joab's men stood by him, and said, "He that favoreth Joab, and he that is for David, let him go after Joab."

And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still. When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

Sheba Is Betrayed

And he went through all the tribes of Israel to Abel, and to Beth-maachah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him. And they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maachah, and they cast up a mound against the city, and it stood against the rampart; and all the people that were with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down.

Then cried a wise woman out of the city, "Hear, hear! say, I pray you, unto Joab, 'Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.'"

And when he was come near to her, the woman said, "Art thou Joab?"

And he answered, "I am he."

Then she said to him, "Hear the words of thy handmaid."

And he answered, "I hear."

Then she spoke, saying: "They were wont to speak in old time, saying, 'They shall surely ask counsel at Abel': and so they ended the matter. I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?"

And Joab answered and said: "Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city."

And the woman said to Joab, "Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall."

Then the woman went to all the people in her wisdom: and they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.

Now Joab was over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites.

THE DEATH OF DAVID

Prince Adonijah Aspires to the Throne

David seems to have neglected naming the heir to his throne, and so Adonijah, the oldest living son of David, claimed it, and raised an insurrection. Nathan informed Solomon's mother, Bathsheba.

Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king."

And he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. His father had not displeased him at any time in saying, "Why hast thou done so?" And he also was a very goodly man; and he was born after Absalom.

And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest; and they following Adonijah helped him. But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David, were not with Adonijah.

And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En-rogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants; but Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.

Wherefore Nathan spoke to Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying: "Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon. Go and get thee in to king David, and say to him, 'Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear to thy handmaid, saying, "Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?" why then doth Adonijah reign?' Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words."

Bath-sheba Reminds the King of His Promise

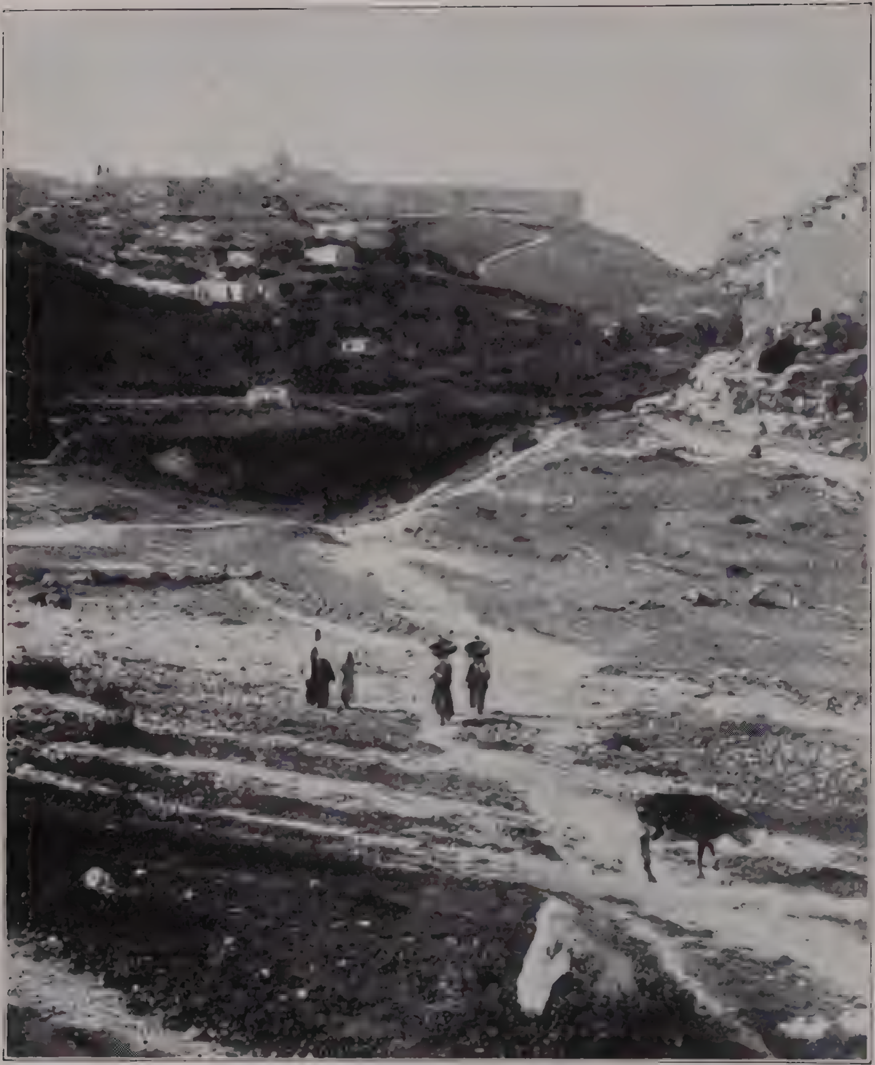
Then Bath-sheba went in to the king into the chamber. And the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite took care of the king. And Bath-sheba bowed, and bent low before the king.

And the king said, "What wouldst thou?"

And she said to him: "My lord, thou swarest by the Lord thy God to thy handmaid, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne.' And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest it not. And he hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host; but Solomon thy servant hath he not called. And now, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldst tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders."

(Thereupon Nathan came in with the same message.)

Then the king swore, and said: "As the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, even as I have



THE KING'S DALE, KIDRON

The spring Enrogel, where Solomon was crowned, lies in the Kidron Valley at the foot of a little path that zigzags down from the right-hand corner of the city wall. In the immediate foreground is the place where Adonijah was giving his political dinner at the moment when the shouting warned him that Solomon had obtained the crown.

"May King Adonijah live!" "God save King Solomon!" Not five hundred yards from each other, these conflicting cries were heard. Again the ambitions of an elder son were frustrated; the handsome and daring Adonijah would never be king. He fled to the sanctuary, and clung to the horns of the altar until the new king promised him his life.

sworn to thee by the Lord God of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead': even so will I certainly do this day."

Then Bath-sheba bowed down with her face to the earth, and did reverence before the king, and said, "Let my lord king David live forever."

Solomon Is Publicly Proclaimed King

And king David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." And they came before the king.

The king also said to them: "Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel; and blow ye the trumpet, and say, 'God save king Solomon!' Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and him I appoint to be ruler over Israel and over Judah."

And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, "Amen: the Lord God of my lord the king say so too."

So Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, went down; and they caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

And Zadok the priest took a horn of oil out of the tent, and anointed Solomon.

And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, "God save king Solomon!"

And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

A Rival for the Kingship Is Defeated

Now Adonijah and all the guests that were with him heard it as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, "Wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar?"

And while he yet spoke, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said to him, "Come in; for thou art a valiant man, and bringest good tidings."

THE TRADITIONAL TOMB OF DAVID, JERUSALEM

The Mohammedans hold the unfounded tradition that David was buried on Mount Zion, on the spot covered by the present structure. This building was originally a church built here to commemorate the Last Supper, which the early Christians believed was celebrated on this spot. The site is therefore sacred to two great religions, the Mohammedan and the Christian.

And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah: "Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king. And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule; and Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, have anointed him king in Gihon; and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This is the noise that ye have heard. And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom. And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king David, saying, 'God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne.' And the king bowed himself upon the bed. And also thus said the king, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it.'"

And all the guests of Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.

The Aged King Gives Counsel to His Son

Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying: "I go the way of all the earth. Be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: that the Lord may continue his word which he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee a man on the throne of Israel.'"

So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.

And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

SOLOMON

Solomon reigned in days of peace;
And to him God gave rest about;
That he might set up a house for his name,
And prepare a sanctuary forever.

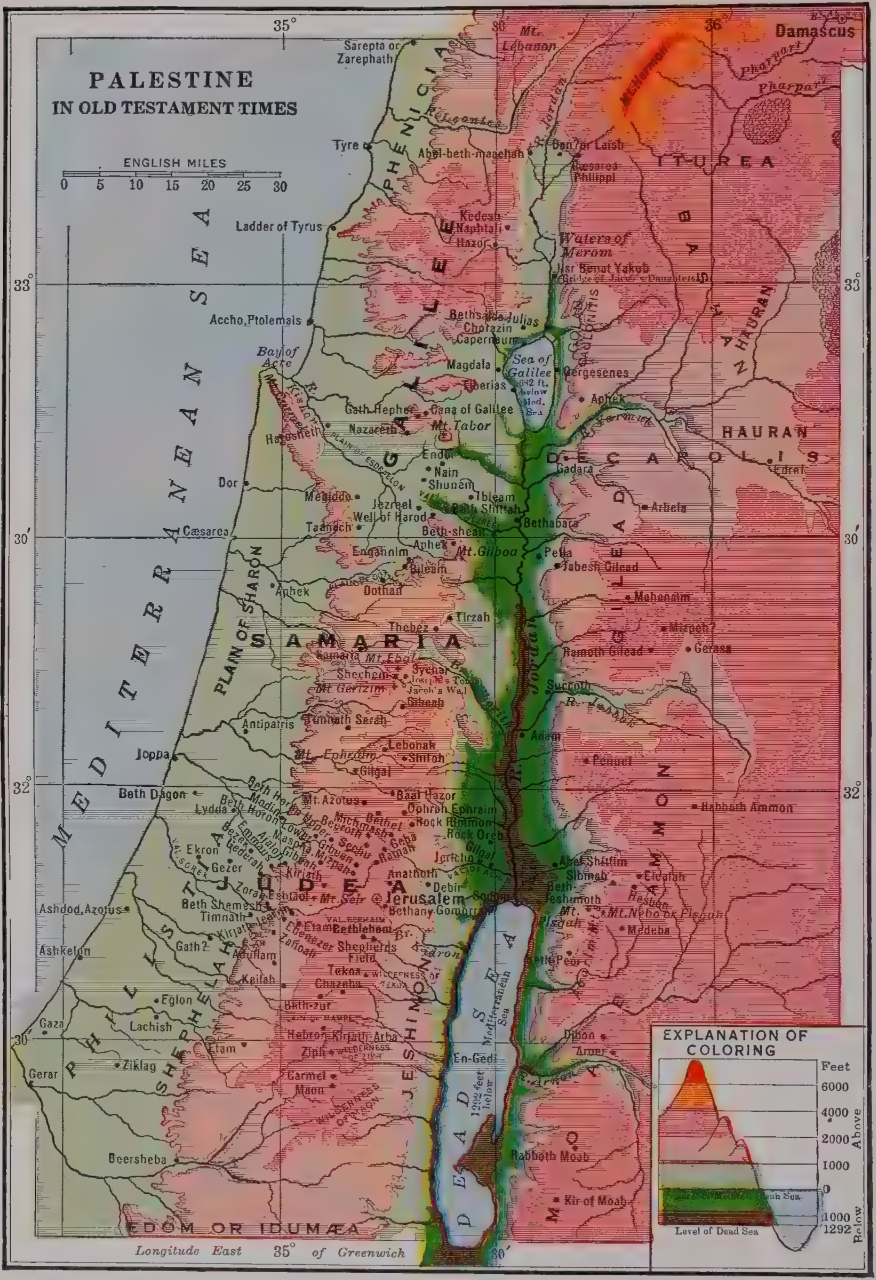
How wise wast thou made in thy youth,
And filled as a river with understanding!
Thy soul covered the whole earth,
And thou filledst it with dark parables.
Thy name reached to the isles afar off;
And for thy peace thou wast beloved.
For thy songs and proverbs and parables,
And for thine interpretations, the countries marveled at thee.

By the name of the Lord God,
Who is called the God of Israel,
Thou didst gather gold as tin,
And didst multiply silver as lead.

But thou didst blemish thine honor,
And stain thy family,
So that thou broughtest wrath upon thy children,
And wast grieved for thy folly:
So the kingdom was divided,
And out of Ephraim ruled a rebellious kingdom.

But the Lord will never leave off his mercy;
Neither shall any of his works perish,
Nor will he blot out the posterity of his elect;
And the family of him that loved him he will not take away.
Wherefore he gave a remnant to Jacob,
And out of him a root to David.

— From "The Praise of Famous Men," by Sirach


PALESTINE
IN OLD TESTAMENT TIMES
ENGLISH MILES
0 5 10 15 20 25 30
EXPLANATION OF COLORING
Feet
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4000
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1292
Above
Below
Level of Dead Sea
Longitude East 35° of Greenwich
35°
36
33°
30′
32°
30′
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Damascus
Sarepta or Zarephath
Mt. Lebanon
Mt. Hermon
Pharpar
Leontes
Tyre
Abel-beth-maachah
Dan or Laish
Cæsarea Philippi
ITUREA
PHENICIA
Kedesh Naphtali
Hazor
Waters of Merom
Jisr Benat Yakob
Bridge of Jacob's Daughters
Ladder of Tyrus
GALILEE
Accho, Ptolemais
Bethsaida Julias
Chorazin
Capernaum
GAULONITIS
HAURAN
Bay of Acre
Magdala
Sea of Galilee
682 ft. below Med. Sea
Gergesenes
Tiberias
Aphek
R. Kishon
Gath Hepher
Cana of Galilee
Nazareth
Mt. Tabor
Harosheth
PLAIN OF ESDRAELON
Endor
Nain
Shunem
DECAPOLIS
Gadara
Edrei
Dor
Megiddo
Jezreel
Ibleam
Well of Harod
Beth Shittah
Arbela
Cæsarea
Taanach
Beth-shean
Bethabara
Aphek
Engannim
Mt. Gilboa
Pella
Jabesh Gilead
Bileam
PLAIN OF SHARON
Aphek
Dothan
Mahanaim
GILEAD
Thebez
Tirzah
Mizpeh?
SAMARIA
Gerasa
Samaria
Mt. Ebal
Sychar
Shechem
Joseph's Tomb
Jacob's Well
Mt. Gerizim
Ramoth Gilead
Gibeah
Succoth
R. Jabbok
Jordan
Antipatris
Timnath Serah
Adam
Joppa
Lebonah
Mt. Ephraim
Shiloh
Gilgal
Penuel
Beth Dagon
Mt. Azotus
Baal Hazor
Ophrah Ephraim
Rabbath Ammon
AMMON
Lydda
Beth Horon Upper
Beth Horon Lower
Michmash
Bethel
Rock Rimmon
Rock Oreb
Modin
Emmaus
Aijalon
Beeroth
Gibeon
Mizpah
Geba
Ramah
Gilgal
Jericho
Ekron
Gederah
Gezer
Kiriath
Anathoth
Abel Shittim
Sibmah
Elealeh
JUDEA
Zorah
Eshtaol
Mt. Seir
Jerusalem
Debir
Sodom
Beth Jeshimoth
Heshbon
Ashdod, Azotus
Beth Shemesh
Timnath
Bethany
Gomorrah
Mt. Pisgah
Mt. Nebo or Pisgah
Medeba
Kiriath Jearim
Etam
Bethlehem
Ebenezer
Zanoah
Shepherds Field
Kidron Br.
Ashkelon
Gath?
Adullam
Beth Peor
Keilah
Tekoa
Chazeba
WILDERNESS OF TEKOA
PHILISTIA
SHEPHELAH
JESHIMON
Eglon
Beth-zur
Gaza
Lachish
Hebron, Kirjath-Arba
Dibon
Etam
Ziph
WILDERNESS OF ZIPH
Aroer
Ziklag
En-Gedi
Gerar
R. Arnon
Carmel
Maon
WILDERNESS OF MAON
DEAD SEA
1292 feet below Mediterranean Sea
Rabbath Moab
MOAB
Beersheba
Kir of Moab
EDOM OR IDUMÆA

SOLOMON

"His Fame Was in All Nations Round About"

SOLOMON has occupied a prominent place in history and tradition throughout the centuries as the wisest of monarchs. His wisdom has been cherished by succeeding generations more than all his other titles to fame. Solomon was no doubt a brilliant man: he had that ready wit, that flash of insight, that knack of pointed and apt speech in which the Oriental especially delights; that power to give currency to the gathered wisdom of the generations by means of some terse saying that every one recognizes as a stroke of genius. Many stories in Hebrew and Arabic tell us of his shrewd judgments, his solutions of riddles and his striking nature comparisons. The Bible attributes to him almost the entire Book of Proverbs, which the ages confess to be a manual of worldly wisdom and sound instruction. It was to hear this wisdom that the Queen of Sheba came from the southland; she had to confess that the half had not been told her.

Through the intercession of his mother Solomon secured the throne, despite the prior claim of his elder brother Adonijah. He thus inherited a large empire from his father David. Not being himself a warrior, however, the new king was unable to maintain the vassalage of several nations which his father had conquered. As a large portion of his income vanished with these seceding states, he was obliged, in order to repair his fortunes, to resort to forced labor and oppressive taxes.

Solomon had adopted the Oriental idea that the best way to make a reign stable was to make it impressive. Since magnificence requires the possession of wealth, to get wealth became his supreme ambition. He set about devising means for securing the revenue which he needed. Some of them were exceedingly interesting. As one means of adding to his revenue Solomon employed his consummate ability for organization. He disregarded the old tribal divisions of the Hebrews and substituted twelve administrative districts. His object was in part to break up any possible resistance which the tribal units might offer and in part to collect revenue for the maintenance of the king's household. Each district under a special officer was to supply the palace with all that was necessary for one month. A royal contribution indeed these officers sent in, enough to take care of at least thirty-five thousand persons. This great number of royal dependents included the officers necessary to conduct the official business and probably a standing army, besides those laborers whom he employed to rebuild, remodel, and fortify various cities which he founded as centers of authority in different parts of his realm.

Perhaps Solomon's most conspicuous achievement was his building enterprises. His first care was to provide himself with a palace and to construct a temple for Jehovah. The magnificence and cost of these buildings is best indicated by the fact that it took thirteen years to build the palace and seven and a half to build the temple. Since no Israelite was capable of planning and executing such work, Solomon turned to Hiram, King of Tyre, who was glad enough to undertake the contract both for timber and talent. Hiram was to be paid in grain and oil. In addition Solomon had to furnish the unskilled labor, in all nearly two hundred thousand men; thirty thousand in the forests of Lebanon, seventy thousand burden-bearers in the quarries near Jerusalem, and eighty thousand more to cut and shape the stones. Over this vast army of toilers he placed thirty-six hundred foremen,—that is, one overseer to every fifty or sixty men.

The memory of Solomon's palace seems to have faded with the years; the temple has received increasing glory on account of the large part it played in the development of Hebrew religion. Though built as the private chapel of the king, it became in later times, notably in the days of Josiah, the one central shrine to which all Israel came for worship. It stood nearly four hundred years, until destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar.

In order to pay for these expensive structures, Solomon entered upon commercial enterprises. Utilizing his father's friend Hiram, King of Tyre, and his skilled sailors and captains, Solomon sent a fleet of merchantmen across the Red Sea to Ophir (Southern Arabia or Western India). Tradition also includes Tarshish of Spain as one of the countries he exploited. These ships returned with gold in great quantities. The Scripture tells us that Solomon's annual receipt of gold was twenty million dollars, the equivalent in purchasing power of three hundred million dollars today. In addition, his captains brought back a miscellaneous cargo truly Oriental, consisting of ivory, almug trees (possibly sandalwood), apes, and peacocks.

Succeeding ages were so impressed by the glamor of this brilliant king that they quite overlooked his serious limitations. To be sure, the Bible writers mention them. They speak of the bloody beginning of his reign, of his enslaving free Israelites for the sake of gratifying his desire for regal magnificence. They deplore his idolatry, in which the numerous gods of his numerous wives were tolerated even in the courts of Jehovah, and they cannot disguise the fact that the crowning argument in favor of the revolt which came in the days of his son Rehoboam was the memory of Solomon's oppression. Yet in spite of these facts Solomon's name has been written high among the kings of Israel, and it still remains as a synonym of all that can be desired of worldly splendor and knowledge.

SOLOMON

The Brilliant Monarch Who Preferred Splendor to the Welfare of His People

WISDOM BEFORE WEALTH

THEN sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly. And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense on high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, "Ask what I shall give thee."

And Solomon said: "Thou hast showed to thy servant David my father great kindness, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him his great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people whom thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?"

And the speech pleased the Lord: that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said to him: "Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern justice; behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like to thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days."

And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

DRASTIC MEASURES AGAINST DISLOYALTY

King Solomon Expels a Treacherous Priest

To Abiathar the priest said the king: "Get thee to Anathoth, to thine own fields; for thou art worthy of death; but I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord God before David my father, and hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted."

So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest to the Lord; that he might fulfil the word of the Lord, which he spoke concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.

Solomon Takes Vengeance upon His Brother

Now Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and rose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

Then it was told Solomon, saying: "Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let king Solomon swear to me today that he will not slay his servant with the sword.'"

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SHUNEM, THE HOME OF DAVID'S NURSE

This picture shows the prickly pear hedges, the acacias and the palms that surround the wretched and ancient village of Shunem. There is little here to remind us of the great prophet, Elisha, and the woman of Shunem who made for him a little chamber over the gate; and nothing to suggest the beauty of Abishag, the fair Shunammite, who was chosen to attend David in his last illness, and for love of whom Adonijah afterwards lost his life.

And Solomon said, "If he will show himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the earth; but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die."

So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said to him, "Go to thy house."

(A little later, however, Adonijah asked the mother of Solomon that he might marry Abishag, who had been King David's nurse. Solomon considered this an effort to obtain influence that might raise him to the throne, and so when Queen Bathsheba reported this to him, he ordered him slain.)

Then king Solomon answered and said to his mother: "And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he is mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah."

Then king Solomon swore by the Lord, saying: "God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life. Now therefore, as the Lord liveth, who hath established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me a house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death this day."

And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died.

Joab Overreaches Himself

Joab, nephew of King David, who had maintained his position as commander in chief of the army by his unscrupulous behavior in destroying the two traitors, Absalom and Amasa, now proved so unwise as to take sides with Adonijah, instead of Solomon. Solomon commanded the loyal Benaiah to kill him. Afterward Benaiah was chosen to succeed Joab at the head of the army.

Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled to the tent of the Lord, and caught hold of the horns of the altar.

And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled to the tent of the Lord; and, "Behold, he is by the altar."

Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, fall upon him."

Then Benaiah came to the tent of the Lord, and said to him, "Thus saith the king, 'Come forth.'"

And he said, "Nay; but I will die here."

And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, "Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me."

Then the king said to him: "Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father. And the Lord shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his family forever; but upon David, and upon his family, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace forever from the Lord."

So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness.

And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his place over the host; and Zadok the priest the king put in the place of Abiathar.

Shimei Pays the Penalty of Disobedience

Shimei was the kinsman of Saul who had reviled King David when he was wearily fleeing over the Mount of Olives, and he had been one of the first to protest abject penitence when David returned in triumph. David had forgiven him, and had spared his life; but he left him to Solomon to be dealt with later.

Now the king sent and called for Shimei, and said to him:

"Build thee a house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither. For it shall be, that on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: thy blood shall be upon thine own head."

And Shimei said to the king, "The saying is good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do." And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days.

And it came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away to Achish, son of Maachah, king of Gath.

And they told Shimei, saying, "Behold, thy servants are in Gath."

And Shimei rose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants; and Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath.

And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.

Then the king sent and called for Shimei, and said to him: "Did I not make thee to swear by the Lord, and protested to thee, saying, 'Know for a certain, on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, that thou shalt surely die?' and thou saidst to me, 'The word that I have heard is good.' Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the Lord, and the commandment that I have charged thee with?"

The king said moreover to Shimei: "Thou knowest all the wickedness which thy heart is acquainted with, that thou didst to David my father; therefore the Lord shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head; and king Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the Lord forever."

So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; who went out, and fell upon him, that he died. And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

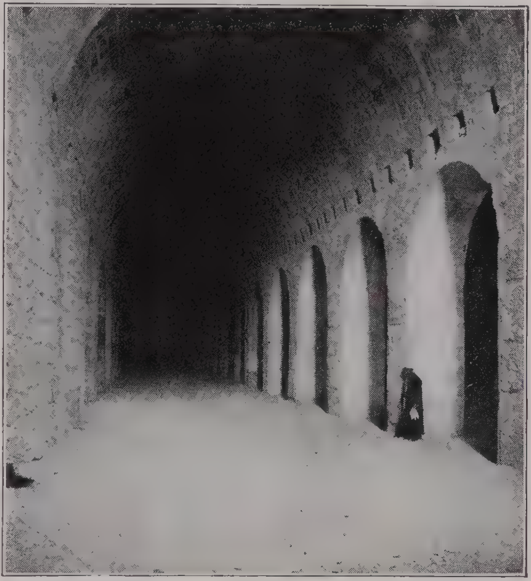
THE MAGNIFICENCE OF A GREAT MONARCH

Solomon Is Renowned for His Wealth and Wisdom

Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry. And Solomon reigned over all the kingdoms from the river to the land of the Philistines, and to the borders of Egypt. They brought tribute, and served Solomon all the days of his life.

And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal; ten fatted oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep, besides harts, and roebucks, and fallow deer and fatted fowl.

For he had dominion over all the region on this side of the river, from Tiphsah even to Gaza, over all the kings on this side of the river; and he had peace on all sides round about him.



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THE SO-CALLED SOLOMON'S STABLES

The Crusaders first used these vaulted passages under Solomon's Temple for stables. Herod the Great is probably responsible for the lower courses, while the Emperor Justinian is the restorer of the vaults themselves which had been broken down in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. On the huge platform above these walls is the Temple area, while the ground beneath one's feet is Mount Moriah.

And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon.

Now Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt; and the king's merchants received them in droves, each drove at a price.

And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

And those officers provided victuals for king Solomon, and for all that came to king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing. Barley also and straw for the horses and dromedaries brought they to the place where the officers were, every man according to his charge.

And God gave to Solomon wisdom and understanding abundantly, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore. And Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the sons of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his name was in all the nations around.

He spoke three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall. And he spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

And there came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom.

Two Women Claim the Same Child

Then there came two women to the king, and stood before him.

And the one woman said: "I beseech thee, my lord: I and this woman dwell in one house; and I bore a child, with her in the house. And it came to pass the third day after, that this woman also bore a child. And we were together; no stranger was with us in the house; only we two were in the house. And this woman's child died in the night; because she lay upon it. And she rose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thy handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to nurse my child, behold, it was dead. But when I had looked at it carefully in the morning, behold, it was not my son."

And the other woman said, "Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son."

And this one said, "No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son." Thus they spoke before the king.

THE JUDGMENT OF KING SOLOMON
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

Then said the king: "The one saith, 'This is my son that liveth, and thy son is dead,' and the other saith, 'Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living.'" And the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other."

Then spoke the woman whose was the living child to the king (for her heart yearned over her son), and she said, "I beseech thee, my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it!"

But the other said, "Let it be neither mine nor thine; divide it."

Then the king answered and said, "Give her [the woman who would not have the child slain] the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof."

And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do justice.

Solomon Builds Himself a Palace

Now Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter. And he brought her into the city of David until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about.

Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house.

He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof was a hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars. And it was covered with cedar above upon the beams, that lay on forty-five pillars, fifteen in a row. There were windows in three rows, and light was against light in three rows. All the doors and posts were square, with the windows: and light was against light in three rows. And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits: and the porch was before them; and pillars and a threshold were before them.

Then he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, even the porch of judgment; and it was covered with cedar from one side of the floor to the other. And his house where he dwelt had another court within the porch, of like work.

Solomon made also a house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife, like this porch.

All these were of costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and without, even

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BEDOUIN CATTLE AT THE POOL OF KING SOLOMON

Three splendid reservoirs hewn from the mountain have long been said to be the work of King Solomon. They lie an hour's walk south of Bethlehem at the head of the Valley of Artas. In their present form they are Roman, possibly the work of Pontius Pilate who took money from the Temple treasury to enlarge the water supply of Jerusalem. Since the Great War they have been reconditioned, and are now in actual use as a part of the water system of Jerusalem. During the rainy months the water would rush down the slopes to the sea, were it not caught and stored for future use.

from the foundation unto the coping, and so on the outside toward the great court. And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits. And above were costly stones, after the measure of hewed stones, and cedars. And the great court round about was with three rows of hewed stones, and a row of cedar beams, both for the inner court of the house of the Lord, and for the porch of the house.

The king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycomore trees that are in the lowland, for abundance.

THE BUILDING AND DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE

Solomon Makes a Contract with Hiram of Tyre

Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the place of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David.

And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying: "Thou knowest how that David my father could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrence. And, behold, I purpose to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke to David my father, saying, 'Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build a house to my name.' Now therefore command thou that they cut me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants; and I will give thee hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt say; for thou knowest that there is not among us any that knoweth how to cut timber like the Sidonians."

And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, "Blessed be the Lord this day, who hath given to David a wise son over this great people."

So Hiram sent to Solomon, saying: "I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need: and we will bring it to thee in rafts by sea to Joppa; and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem. And thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household." So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all

THE BAZAAR AT JAFFA (JOPPA)

The ledge of rocks lying off Jaffa forms the only semblance to a natural harbor on the coast of Palestine. To this point the Phœnicians brought their rafts of logs from Lebanon, and from this landing place oxen and men drew them up the Judean hills to Jerusalem. Jaffa is still a busy commercial town. The camels bring grain, olives, and oranges from the interior and take back kerosene, timber, and the manufactures of the west.

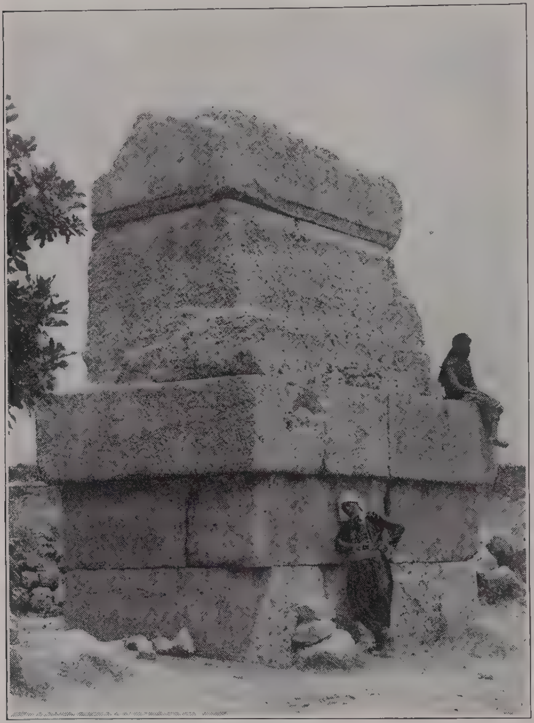
his desire. And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.

Solomon Recompenses Hiram

And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together.

And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men. And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the Lord, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of

Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. And all the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the Israelites, their children who were left after them in the land, whom the Israelites were not able utterly to destroy,—of them did Solomon raise a levy of bondservants, even to this day. But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondservants; but they were the men of war, and his servants and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots and his horsemen. These were the chief officers that were over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty who bore rule over the people that wrought in the work. And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord, and the king's house (now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir trees, and with gold, according to all his desire), that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.



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TRADITIONAL TOMB OF KING HIRAM

And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not. And he said, "What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother?" And he called them the land of Cabul [Displeasing] unto this day.

("Cabul" was a term of contempt. Galilee itself is noted for its fertility. Perhaps King Hiram thought the number of towns given him too few, in consideration of his importance and his services.)

And Hiram sent to the king sixscore talents of gold.

The Temple Is Reared

Now Solomon sent the men to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses; a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home; and Adoniram was over the levy. Solomon had seventy thousand that bore burdens, and eighty thousand hewers in the mountains; besides the chief of Solomon's officers who were over the work, three thousand and three hundred, who ruled over the people that wrought in the work. And the king commanded, and they quarried great stones, costly stones, and hewn stones, to lay the foundations of the house.

And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord.

The house which king Solomon built for the Lord, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits.

And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house.

And in the eleventh year, in the eighth month, was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it.

HIRAM, BUILDER OF THE TEMPLE

From a painting by James J. Tissot

This Hiram is not to be confounded with Hiram, king of Tyre, who furnished the skilled artisans and much of the material for the construction of Solomon's Temple. This man is the cunning founder of brass to whose skill Solomon owed the construction of the great pillars, the engraved capitals and the huge "sea" which so astonished and delighted the Israelites.

The Dedication

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant out of the city of David, which is Zion. And all the men of Israel assembled themselves to Solomon at the feast, in the seventh month.

And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the Lord, and the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

So king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled to him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the

Lord to its place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubim.

There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord. Then spoke Solomon:

> "The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the
> thick darkness.
> I have surely built thee a house to dwell in,
> A place for thee to abide in forever."

And the king turned his face about and blessed all the congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood. Then he said: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who spoke with his mouth to David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying: 'Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house, that my name might be therein; but I chose David to be over my people Israel.' And it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. And the Lord said to David my father, 'Whereas it was in thy heart to build a house to my name, thou didst well that it was in thy heart. Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son, he shall build the house to my name.' The Lord hath performed his word that he spoke, and I am risen up in the place of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built a house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt."

THE TEMPLE IS DEDICATED BY PRAYER

And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven; and he said:

"O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in heaven above, nor on earth beneath; who keepest covenant, and showest mercy to thy servants, that walk before thee with all their heart: who hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thy hand, as it is this day. Now therefore, O Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying: 'There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.' Now then, O Lord God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken to thy servant David.

"Will God in very deed dwell on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: how much less this house which I have built! Yet have thou respect to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken to the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee; that thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said that thou wouldst put thy name there: to hearken to the prayer which thy servant shall pray toward this place. And hearken thou to the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place; yea, hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.

"If a man sin against his neighbor, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and he come and swear before thine altar in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, requiting the wicked, by bringing his way upon his own head; and justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.

"When thy people Israel are smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee: if they turn again to thee and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication before thee in this house; then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again to the land which thou gavest to them and to their fathers.

"When the heavens are shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee, yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them: then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, because thou hast taught them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

SOLOMON DEDICATING THE TEMPLE
From a painting by Gladstone Solomon

"If there be famine in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting or mildew, locust or caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague or whatsoever sickness there be; then whatever prayer or supplication shall be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, who shall know every man his own plague and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands toward this house: then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and render to every man according to all his ways, whose heart thou knowest (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men); that they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest to our fathers.

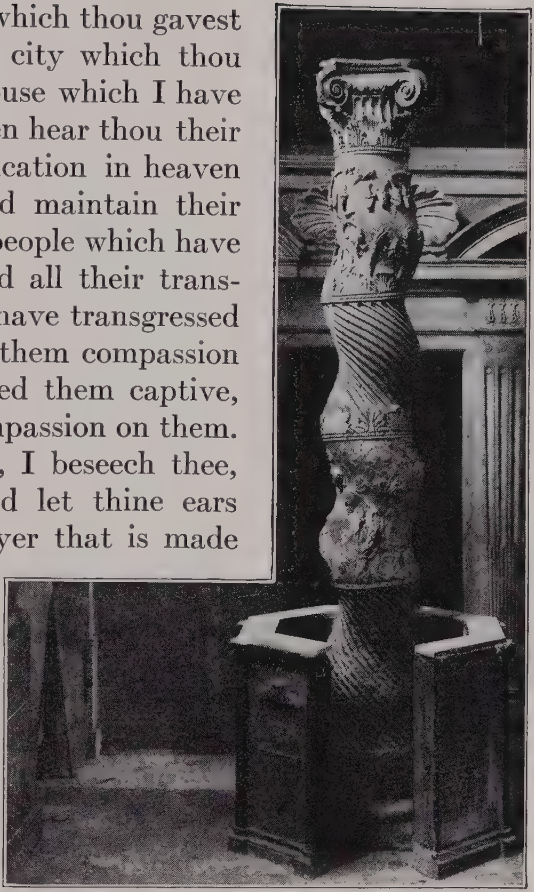
"Moreover concerning the foreigner, who is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for thy name's sake (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy mighty hand, and of thine outstretched arm); when he shall come and pray toward this house; then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the foreigner calleth to thee for; that all people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as doth thy people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by thy name.

"If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatsoever way thou shalt send them, and they pray to the Lord toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name: then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

"If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not), and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captive unto the land of the enemy, far off or near; yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn again, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captive, saying, 'We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have dealt wickedly'; if they return unto thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who carried them captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause; and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee; and give them compassion before those who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them.

"Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attentive to the prayer that is made in this place.

"Now therefore rise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant."



TRADITIONAL PILLAR OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

In Saint Peter's, Rome

Although the richness of this pillar suggests the splendor of Solomon, its Greek top challenges the tradition that it came from his Temple. The representation of living things indicates that it did not come from Herod's Temple even, for he respected the Jewish scruples embodied in the Second Commandment. But it is certainly Eastern. Bernini used it as a model for the twisted pillars that uphold the massive bronze canopy over the high altar in Saint Peter's Cathedral.

The King Blesses His People

And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying to the Lord, he rose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread forth toward heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying: "Blessed be the Lord, who hath given rest to his people Israel, according to all that he promised. There hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant. The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us: that he may incline our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his ordinances, which he commanded our fathers.

"And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh to the Lord our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require: that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else. Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day."

And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the Lord.

Also at the same time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath to the river of Egypt. And in the eighth day they made a solemn assembly: for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days.

And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the Lord had showed to David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.

Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord, and the king's house: and all that came into Solomon's heart to make in the house of the Lord, and in his own house, he prosperously effected.

God Approves Solomon's Work

And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do, that the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon.

And the Lord said to him: "I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there forever; and mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually.

"And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments; then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel forever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, 'There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.' But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my

THE ENTRANCE TO THE TEMPLE AREA

From an etching by E. M. Lilien

You are standing under the so-called "Gate of the Chain," facing away from the Temple. The beautifully ornamented niche in front of you is a fountain supplied with water from the spring near the Pools of Solomon. The narrow passageway on the left is in reality a bridge over the Tyropœon Valley, the bottom of which is at least a hundred feet below this pavement. The lane leads to the great bazaar and the Joppa Gate.

statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them; then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people: and though this house is so high, yet shall every one that passeth by it be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, 'Why hath the Lord done thus to this land, and to this house?' And they shall answer: 'Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshiped them, and served them: therefore hath the Lord brought upon them all this evil.'"

THE VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

"The Half Was not Told Me"

And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions.

And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bore spices, and very much gold, and precious stones. And when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not anything hid from the king, which he told her not.

And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the food of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings which he offered up in the house of the Lord: there was no more spirit in her.

And she said to the king: "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thine acts and of thy wisdom.

KING SOLOMON RECEIVING THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

From a painting by Sir Edward J. Poynter

This painting is the attempt of an artist-archæologist to represent one of the most interesting passages in Hebrew history. The architecture is in general quite characteristic of the fourth to the eighth century B.C. The ornaments on the approaches to Solomon's throne remind one of the brilliant tile-work recovered from the ruins of Susa (Shushan) and Ecbatana and Nineveh. The peacocks in the foreground were imported, according to Scripture, in Solomon's ships of Tarshish. All this magnificence would surely impress even a queen from Sheba, who doubtless hoped for better commercial relations with Solomon.

Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, that stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, who delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel. Because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee king, to do justice and righteousness."

And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

The navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of sandalwood trees and precious stones.

And the king made of the sandalwood trees pillars for the house of the Lord, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such sandalwood trees, nor were seen to this day.

And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned, and went to her own country, she and her servants.

THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

From a painting by Julius Kronberg

Sheba in southwestern Arabia was the seat of an influential commercial empire. History knows nothing of this queen whose visit to Solomon looms so large in the traditions of the splendor-loving Jewish monarch.

Lavish Splendor Surrounds the King

Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold; besides that from the tradesmen, and from the traffic of the spice merchants, and from all the kings and from the governors of the country.

And he made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pounds of gold went to one shield; and he put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind; and there were arms on either side on the place of the seat; and two lions stood beside the arms. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other on the six steps. There was not the like made in any kingdom.

SOLOMON IN ALL HIS GLORY

From a drawing by Henry Sandham

And all king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver: it was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. For the king had at sea a navy of Tarshish [in Spain] with the navy of Hiram. Once in three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.

And king Solomon made two hundred bucklers of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of beaten gold went to one buckler. And three hundred shields made he of beaten gold: three hundred shekels of gold went to one shield. And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. And all the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his tribute: vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, and armor, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

Solomon Proves Himself a Great Builder

It came to pass at the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the house of the Lord, and his own house, that the cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there.

And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it. And he built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the store cities, which he built in Hamath.

Also he built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars; and Baalath, and all the store cities that Solomon had, and all the chariot cities, and the cities of the horsemen, and all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion.

Moreover, king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon.

EVILS AT HOME AND FOES ABROAD

Solomon's Idolatry Brings Severe Punishment

But king Solomon loved many foreign women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites: of the nations concerning which the Lord said to the children of Israel: "Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon loved these. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses.

BETH-HORON THE UPPER

Quite characteristic of Judea is this little village against the sky, with the guest-house of the sheik the most important structure. Upon what scenes has it looked down!—for it commands one of those routes from the plain to the watershed, which every invading army must take. By Beth-horon Jehovah cast down great stones upon Joshua's enemies; by Beth-horon Judas Maccabeus crushed the Syrian invaders; past Beth-horon fought Allenby's troops, as with sweat and blood they drove the Turk forever from Palestine.

And his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.[34] And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father.

Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, who burnt incense and sacrificed to their gods.

And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he kept not that which the Lord commanded.

Wherefore the Lord said to Solomon: "Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding, in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

And the Lord stirred up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's kinsmen in Edom.

And God stirred up another adversary to him, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah. And he gathered men to him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah; and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus. And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad did: and he abhorred Israel, and he reigned over Syria.

The Prediction of Samuel Is Fulfilled

The prophecy of Samuel regarding the burdens which would be laid upon the people if Israel chose a king to rule over them, was fulfilled during the reign of Solomon:

"This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots; and he will appoint them to him for captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and he will set them to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and the instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be perfumers, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best

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OFFERINGS TO FALSE GODS, SOLOMON'S TEMPLE of them; and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king whom ye shall have chosen you."

JEROBOAM THREATENS THE KINGDOM OF SOLOMON

Now Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, Solomon's servant, even he lifted up his hand against the king.

The man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valor. And Solomon, seeing the young man that he was industrious, had given him charge over all the labor of the house of Joseph.

And it came to pass at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way. Now Ahijah had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field. And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces.

And he said to Jeroboam: "Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee; because they have forsaken me, and have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon; and they have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father. Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand; but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes: but I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it to thee, even ten tribes. And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt

JEROBOAM AND THE PROPHET AHIJAH

From a drawing by Isings

This represents the dramatic symbol-prophecy in which by the rending of his robe the man of God gave Jeroboam the promise of ten tribes.

be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken to all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in mine eyes, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and will build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to thee.' "

Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam; but Jeroboam rose, and fled into Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.

And Solomon[35] slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father; and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

THE CRY OF THE PEOPLE

When wilt thou save the people?
O God of mercy, when?
Not kings and lords, but nations;
Not thrones and crowns, but men.
Flowers of thy heart, O God, are they;
Let them not pass like weeds away;
Let them not fade in sunless day:
God save the people!

Shall crime bring crime forever,
Strength aiding still the strong?
Is it thy will, O Father,
That man shall toil for wrong?
"No!" say the mountains, "No!" the skies;
"Man's clouded sun shall gladly rise,
And songs be heard instead of sighs."
God save the people!

When wilt thou save the people?
O God of mercy, when?
The people, Lord, the people,
Not thrones and crowns, but men.
God save the people; thine they are,
Thy children, as thy angels fair:
From vice, oppression and despair
God save the people!

—*Ebenezer Elliot*

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

THE PRAISE OF FAMOUS MEN

Let us now praise famous men,
And our fathers that begat us.
The Lord hath wrought great glory by them
Through his great power from the beginning.
Such as did bear rule in their kingdoms,
Men renowned for their power,
Giving counsel by their understanding,
And declaring prophecies:
Leaders of the people by their counsels,
And by their knowledge of learning meet for the people,
Wise and eloquent in their instructions:
Such as found out musical tunes,
And set forth verses in writing:
Rich men furnished with ability,
Living peaceably in their habitations:
All these were honored in their generations,
And were the glory of their times.
And some there be, that have left a name behind them,
That their praise might be reported.
And some there be, who have no memorial;
Who are perished, as though they had never been;
And are become as though they had never been born;
And their children after them.
But these were merciful men,
Whose righteousness hath not been forgotten.
With their offspring shall continually remain a good inheritance,
And their children are within the covenant.
Their family standeth fast, and their children for their sakes.
Their family shall remain forever,
And their glory shall not be blotted out.
Their bodies were buried in peace;
But their name liveth forevermore.
The people will tell of their wisdom,
And the congregation will show forth their praise.

—*From "The Praise of Famous Men," by Sirach*

OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE KING-

JUDAH	DATE B.C.	ISRAEL	DATE B.C.	PROPHETS
Rehoboam	933–917	Jeroboam I	933–912	Shemaiah, Ahijah
Abijam	917–914			
Asa	913–873	Nadab Baasha Elah Zimri	912–911 911–888 888–887 887 (7 days)	Azariah Hanani Jehu
		Omri	887–875	
		Ahab	875–854	Elijah
Jehoshaphat	873–849			Elijah, Micaiah
		Ahaziah	854–853	Elijah
		Jehoram (Joram)	853–842	Elijah, Elisha
Jehoram	849–842			Elisha
Ahaziah	842			
Athaliah	842–836	Jehu	842–815	
Joash (Jehoash)	836–797			
		Jehoahaz Jehoash (Joash)	814–798 798–783	
Amaziah	797–779	Jeroboam II	783–743	Amos
Uzziah (Azariah)	779–740			Isaiah, Hosea
		Zechariah	743 (6 mo.)	Isaiah, Hosea
		Shallum	743 (1 mo.)	Isaiah, Hosea
		Menahem	743–737	Isaiah, Hosea
Jotham	740–736	Pekahiah	737–736	Isaiah, Hosea, Micah
Ahaz	736–728	Pekah	736–730	Isaiah, Hosea, Micah
		Hoshea	730–722	Isaiah, Hosea, Micah
Hezekiah	727–695	The fall of Samaria and end of the Kingdom of Israel.		Isaiah, Hosea, Micah

DOMS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN JUDAH AND ISRAEL AND THEIR CONTACT WITH FOREIGN NATIONS
Egypt—Shishak invades Israel and Judah and carries off treasures from temple and palace. War between Jeroboam and Rehoboam.
Syria—Tabrimmon joins Abijam against Israel. Abijam wins decisive victory over Jeroboam, capturing Bethel, Jeshanah and Ephron.
Syria—Benhadad I is bribed by Asa, breaks his treaty with Baasha, and plunders the cities of Israel. Arabia—Zerah, a Cushite prince, is repelled by Asa from invading Judah. Assyria—Ashurnasirpal exacts tribute from the Phœnicians. He was the first Assyrian monarch to threaten Hebrew territory.
Phœnicia—Ethbaal gives his daughter Jezebel in marriage to Ahab, son of Omri. Syria—Benhadad I captures several cities from Omri and establishes Syrian quarters in Samaria.
Moab—Mesha recovers and fortifies his chief northern cities subjugated by Omri and retained by Ahab. Syria—Benhadad II besieges Samaria and is defeated and captured by Ahab. Assyria—Shalmaneser III wins a victory over a coalition to which Ahab contributes 10,000 men and 2,000 chariots. Syria—An attack upon Syria by Ahab and Jehoshaphat is unsuccessful.
Moab—Mesha repulses Jehoram (Joram), Jehoshaphat and the Edomites. Syria—Benhadad II in order to check an Assyrian invasion abandons his attack against Jehoram. Edom—Edom revolts from Jehoram. Syria—Hazael tries to force Jehoram into an alliance against Assyria, but is defeated by Jehoram and Ahaziah of Judah at Ramoth-gilead.
Assyria—Shalmaneser III invades Syria and forces Jehu to become his vassal and pay tribute.
Syria—Hazael threatens Jerusalem but is bought off by Joash.
Syria—Hazael attacks Jehoahaz with relentless cruelty and forces him to pay tribute. Assyria—Adadnirari IV conquers Israel. Syria—Benhadad III is thrice defeated by Jehoash and surrenders cities formerly captured from Jehoahaz. Jehoash conquers Amaziah and captures Jerusalem.
Edom—Invading bands are repulsed by Amaziah, who secures Elath on the Red Sea. Assyria—Shalmaneser IV and Assurdan attack Syria and Jeroboam II has a period of peace.
Philistia, Arabia and Ammon are subdued by Uzziah.
Assyria—Tiglathpileser IV (Pul) invades northern Syria. Menahem forced to pay tribute.
Syria—Rezon joins with Pekah in an unsuccessful effort to force Ahaz into a coalition against Assyria. Assyria—Tiglathpileser joins Ahaz against Syria, deports inhabitants of cities of Israel, levies tribute on Israel and Judah, overthrows Pekah, and appoints Hoshea to his place. Assyria—Shalmaneser V aroused by Hoshea's attempted alliance with Egypt overruns Israel and besieges Samaria for three years. Assyria—Sargon carries captive 27,290 Samaritans, imports foreign captives, and subjects remaining Samaritans to Assyrian officers.

JUDAH	DATE B.C.	PROPHETS	THE RELATIONS BETWEEN JUDAH AND ISRAEL AND THEIR CONTACT WITH FOREIGN NATIONS
Hezekiah *Continued—*	727–695	Isaiah	Assyria—Sargon punishes Judah, Moab, and Edom for their Philistine sympathies. Babylon—Merodach-baladan tries to persuade Hezekiah to revolt against Assyria. Philistines—The city of Ekron sends Hezekiah their Assyrian appointee and he imprisons him. Assyria—Sennacherib takes 46 strongholds of Judah, imprisons Hezekiah in Jerusalem, carries away 200,150 captives; but pestilence and the advance of the Egyptians prevent his capturing Jerusalem.
Manasseh	695–641		Assyria—Esarhaddon receives tribute from Manasseh. Assyria—Asshurbanipal quells rebellious Phœnicians but Manasseh is unmolested.
Amon	641–639		
Josiah	639–608	Zephaniah Nahum	Egypt—Pharaoh-necho invades Palestine. Josiah makes unsuccessful resistance at Megiddo where he is killed.
Jehoahaz (Shallum)	608		Egypt—Pharaoh-necho II carries Jehoahaz a prisoner to Egypt, where he dies, and appoints Jehoiakim over Judah.
Jehoiakim (Eliakim)	607–597	Jeremiah	Babylon—Nebuchadnezzar II defeats the Egyptians at Carchemish and with his allies quells Jehoiakim's revolt.
Jehoiachin Zedekiah (Mattaniah)	597 597–586	Jeremiah Jeremiah, Ezekiel	Babylon—Nebuchadnezzar II besieges Jerusalem, carries Jehoiachin captive to Babylon and makes Zedekiah king. Babylon—Nebuchadnezzar II to quell rebellion of Zedekiah besieges Jerusalem for three years; he finally takes it and carries Zedekiah and most of the people captive to Babylon. Babylon—Amil-Marduk (Evil-Merodach) releases Jehoiachin and treats him kindly.

JUDAH, THE KINGDOM OF THE SOUTH

REHOBOAM

A Ruler Whose Folly Divided His Kingdom

Rehoboam's mother was Naamah the Ammonitess. The boy grew up under a double handicap, the influence of his heathen mother's religion, and the example of his autocratic father. What ideals of righteousness, justice, or democracy might be reasonably expected to develop in the midst of an intriguing court and an ever increasing luxury?

The first disaster to blight his reign was the loss of five-sixths of his kingdom through revolt. The revolt came through his own foolishness. When the king went to Shechem to have all Israel approve his nomination, he found the northern tribes disposed to bargain with him. They had stood all of Solomon's methods they could endure. If the young Rehoboam was willing to return to the less oppressive methods of David or Saul, they would be content to let him become their king; if not, their loyalty would go elsewhere. They demanded a clear statement of policy: "Will you remove your father's yoke, or will you not?" Rehoboam saw that they were determined, and he took three days to consider.

His father's advisers counseled moderation. His young friends bade him assert his authority. In his ignorance, the latter counsel seemed good to Rehoboam, and at the end of his three days he returned an autocrat's and a fool's answer: "My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." The people's reply was instant and decisive,

"What portion have we in David?
To your tents, O Israel!"

Rehoboam assumed his father's manner and ordered Adoram, the overseer of the labor gangs, to set the people to work. The people stoned the overseer to death. Not knowing what to do next, Rehoboam fled. The ten northern tribes then elected Jeroboam head of the northern state, which took the name Israel. The fateful breach was consummated.

The second disaster was an invasion by Shishak of Egypt. According to the Bible, Shishak took away all the gold shields that Rehoboam's father Solomon had hung up in his Hall of the Forest of Lebanon. According to Shishak's own inscription at Karnak, he captured one hundred and fifty-six cities of Judah and Israel.

The shrines to the Ammonite god which Solomon had introduced when he married Rehoboam's mother were used throughout his son's reign, and continued to exercise their baleful influence "till good Josiah drove them thence to hell." The reign of Rehoboam is unrelieved by a single happy incident, and Rehoboam stands the first and nearly the worst among the unworthy representatives of David's royal line.

REHOBOAM FOLLOWS EVIL COUNSEL

THEN Rehoboam went to Shechem; for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it (for he was yet in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of king Solomon; and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt, and they sent and called him), that Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, "Thy father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore make thou the hard service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee."

And he said to them, "Depart yet for three days, and come again to me." And the people departed. And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, who stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, "How do ye advise me to make answer to this people?"

And they spoke to him, saying, "If thou wilt be a servant to this people this day, and wilt serve them, and hearken to them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants forever."

But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they gave him, and consulted with the young men who had grown up with him, and who stood before him. And he said to them, "What do ye advise that we should answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, 'Make the yoke which thy father put upon us lighter'?"

And the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying: "Thus shalt thou speak to this people that spoke to thee, saying, 'Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter to us'; thus shalt thou say to them, 'My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now, whereas

" 'My father loaded you with a heavy yoke,
I will add to your yoke:
My father hath chastised you with whips;
But I will chastise you with scorpions.' "

So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king appointed, saying, "Come to me again the third day." And the king answered the people roughly and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him. And he spoke to them after the counsel of the young men, saying:

"My father made your yoke heavy,
And I will add to your yoke:
My father also chastised you with whips;
But I will chastise you with scorpions."

Israel Rebels

So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not to them, the people answered the king, saying:

"What portion have we in David?
Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse!
To your tents, O Israel!
Now see to thine own house, David!"

So Israel departed to their tents.

Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.[36]

The King of Egypt Attacks Jerusalem

When Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand chosen men that were warriors, to fight

AN ARCHED STREET IN JERUSALEM

against the house of Israel, to bring back the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying: "Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying: 'Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel; return every man to his house; for this thing is from me.'"

So they hearkened to the word of the Lord, and returned and went their way, according to the word of the Lord.

Now Rehoboam reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord chose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they committed, above all that their fathers had done. For they also built them high places, and images, and sacred posts, on every high hill, and under every green tree.

Now it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.[37] And he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all; and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. And king Rehoboam made in their stead bronze shields, and committed them to the hands of the chief of the guard, who kept the door of the king's house. And it was so, when the king went into the house of the Lord, that the guard bore them, and brought them back into the guard chamber.

And Rehoboam appointed Abijam the son of Maacah the chief, to be ruler among his brethren; for he thought to make him king. And he dealt wisely, and dispersed of all his children throughout all the lands of Judah and Benjamin, to every fortified city: and he gave them victuals in abundance.

And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days.

And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David.

ABIJAM

Abijam, like his father, tried to win back the northern provinces. He defeated Jeroboam in battle, and took three neighboring towns and their surrounding villages.

Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat began Abijam to reign over Judah. Three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And he walked in all the sins of his father [Rehoboam], which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father.

Now there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. And Abijam set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred thousand chosen men. Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, being mighty men of valor.

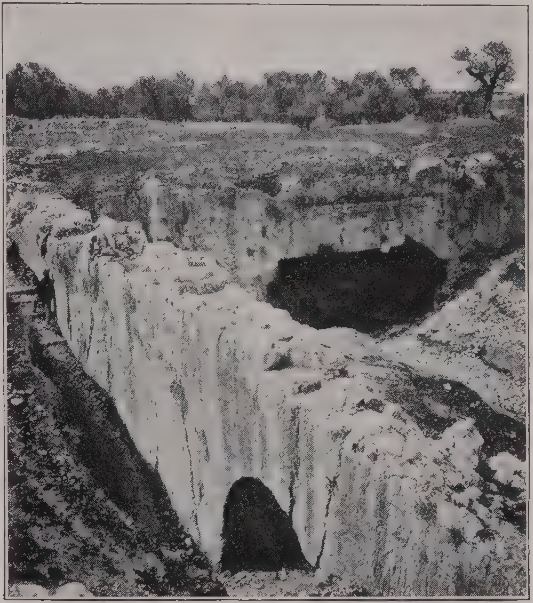
And Abijam stood up upon mount Zemaraim, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, and said: "Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel; ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, rose up, and rebelled against his lord. And there were gathered unto him vain men, base fellows that strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and faint-hearted, and could not withstand them. And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David; and ye are a great multitude, and there are with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods. Have ye not cast out the priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the peoples of other lands? so that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, the same becometh a priest of them that are no gods.

"But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, who minister to the Lord, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their work; and they burn to the Lord every morning and every evening burnt offerings and sweet incense. The showbread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the Lord our God; but ye have forsaken him.

And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to sound an alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper."

But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them; so they were before Judah, and the ambushment was behind them. And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind.

And they cried to the Lord, and the priests sounded with the trumpets. Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijam and Judah.



TOMB OF THE KINGS, JERUSALEM

Only the name connects this huge excavation with the kings of Judah. This sculptured entrance and fore-court now filled with rubbish, lead to a series of underground chambers originally the burying vaults of a royal family. They probably were constructed by Queen Helena of Adiabene, who became a convert to Judaism in the first century A.D. and who supplied the inhabitants of Jerusalem with food during the famine mentioned in the Book of Acts. She was buried here in 48 A.D. half a mile beyond the Damascus Gate, on the main road leading northward from the city.

And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand. And Abijam and his people slew them with a great slaughter. Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers. And Abijam pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, Beth-el with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and Ephron with the towns thereof.

So Abijam slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David.

ASA

Asa's reforms were commendable, and his victory over the Ethiopians was encouraging; but when he sought aid from the Syrians, he took the first step that led to complications with foreign countries. He was the king who first entangled Judah with the northern nations.

Asa's Policy Is One of Vigorous Reform

And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah. And forty-one years reigned he in Jerusalem.

Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did David his father, for he removed all the idols that his fathers had made. And he commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him. And he built fortified cities in Judah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the Lord had given him rest.

Therefore he said to Judah: "Let us build these cities, and make about them walls and towers, gates and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the Lord our God. We have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side." So they built and prospered.

Asa Wins a Victory over the Ethiopians

And Asa had an army that bore shields and spears; out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bore shields and drew bows, two hundred and eighty thousand: all these were mighty men of valor.

There came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an army of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and he came unto Mareshah.

Then Asa went out to meet him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.

And Asa cried to the Lord his God, and said: "Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee."

So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled. And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them to Gerar: and there fell of the Ethiopians so many that they could not recover themselves; for they were destroyed before the Lord, and before his host; and they carried away very much booty.

And they smote all the cities round about Gerar; for the fear of the Lord came upon them: and they took booty from all the cities; for there was much booty in them. They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.

The King Makes a New Covenant with Jehovah

Now the spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded: and he went out to meet Asa, and said to him: "Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. But when they in their trouble turned to the Lord God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them. And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity. Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded."

And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from the hill country of Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the Lord, that was before the porch of the Lord. And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him. So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.

And they offered to the Lord in that day, of the booty which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep. And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; that whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. And they swore to the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about.

Also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped upon it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron. But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.

And he brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels. And there was no more war to the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

A Prophet Denounces the King's Policy

In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the Lord and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-hadad of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying: "There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me." So Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth [the Lake of Galilee], with all the land of Naphtali. And it came to pass, when Baasha heard thereof, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah.

Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none was exempted; and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.

And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa, king of Judah, and said to him: "Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and hast not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thy hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thy hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars."

VALLEY OF THE KIDRON AND MOUNT OF OLIVES

From a photograph by Annan and Swan

The tombs hewn out of solid rock in the foreground of the picture, belong to the late Jewish period. The little slabs of stone lying on the ground, both near at hand and covering the whole slope of Olivet, are all of them Jewish gravestones. A prophecy, beloved by many Jews and Arabs in common, places the scene of the Last Judgment here in this valley of the Kidron. Happy the man therefore who can be buried so near such an important place. Gehenna, or the Hebrew hell, is located in the middle of the earth just beneath this valley.

Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time.

And Asa in the thirty-ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great; yet in his disease he sought not the Lord, but the physicians [possibly, "enchanters"].

And Asa died in the forty-first year of his reign, and he slept with his fathers. And they buried him in his own sepulchers, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed, which was filled with sweet odors and divers kinds of spices prepared by the perfumers' art: and they made a very great burning for him.

JEHOSHAPHAT

A Good King and a Prosperous Reign

Jehoshaphat is classed by the Biblical writers as a good king. This is partly because he continued his father Asa's policy of loyalty to Jehovah. During his reign no foreign idolatries polluted the holy temple, though in the local high places, which had originally been Canaanitish shrines, the somewhat mixed forms of Jehovah-worship still went on. We read also from the Book of Kings that he undertook moral reforms, particularly the uprooting of certain foul practices associated with idolatry. The Book of Chronicles tells us somewhat more in detail about the good king's educational measures and his reform of the national system of law. He sent various men of importance to teach in the cities of Judah—original circuit riders, who went from town to town explaining to the people the meaning of the book of the law of Jehovah. He also established judges in the various cities and instructed them to deal justly in the fear of Jehovah, to respect no person, and to take no bribe. In his personal life also he seemed to be deeply religious. He undertook no enterprise without consulting God. Before every battle he consulted the will of Jehovah and asked for his help.

Jehoshaphat was a vigorous soldier. Edom, which had revolted from Solomon, he reconquered and held as a subject province. The Ammonites, their allies, he also defeated. When Ahab sought to wrest the heights of Gilead from Syria, and again when Ahab's son, Jehoram, undertook to reconquer Moab, Jehoshaphat joined in as Israel's ally and drove his chariot into the thickest of the fighting. The Philistines paid tribute to him. The Arabs sent contributions of flocks by the thousand so that, as the chronicler tells us, "he had riches and honor in abundance."

Jehoshaphat also had an eye to business. To get money for his military and agricultural schemes, he undertook to renew Solomon's foreign commerce by building merchant ships at the Red Sea port, Ezion-geber. Disaster, however, overtook the fleet before it sailed, and he lost all he invested.

The most interesting and important chapter in his reign is the story of his dealings with Israel. Realizing that war was unprofitable, he resolved to end the long contest which both kingdoms had inherited from the days of Rehoboam. Though he might have waged successful war against Ahab, he made an alliance with him. This alliance was cemented in the usual way by marrying his son and heir Jehoram to Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. This alliance proved to be most unfortunate for Judah: it brought Jehoshaphat into a war with Syria which nearly cost him his life, as it actually cost Ahab his life; it paved the way for the introduction of Phœnician Baal-worship into Judah; it caused the death of his grandson Ahaziah at the hands of Jehu; and it nearly extinguished the royal family when the murderous Athaliah usurped the throne. In this respect, therefore, Jehoshaphat's usual sagacity failed him.

To the many blessings brought by this king on his people during the twenty-five years of his reign, we may still add the creation in the hearts of later generations of a higher ideal of kingship. In this way his memory became an inspiration to an oppressed and humiliated people five centuries after the good king himself had "slept with his fathers."

JEHOSHAPHAT APPOINTS ITINERANT TEACHERS

Jehoshaphat [the son of Asa] reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel. And he placed forces in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.

And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not to the Baalim; but sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat tribute; and he had riches and honor in abundance. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord, and furthermore he took away the high places and the sacred posts out of Judah.

Also in the third year of his reign he sent his princes to teach in the cities of Judah. And with them he sent Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests. And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and they went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat. And some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat tribute, and tribute silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he-goats.

And Jehoshaphat grew great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store. And he had much business in the cities of Judah; and the men of war, mighty men of valor, were in Jerusalem.

The King Allies Himself with Israel

Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance; and he allied himself with Ahab by marriage. And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that were with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead.

And Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead?"

And he answered him, "I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war."

(In this battle King Ahab was struck by a chance arrow, and was slain. The account may be read in the life of Ahab, page 335 of this volume.)

STEPS LEADING TO THE VIRGIN'S SPRING, ANCIENT GIHON

From an etching by E. M. Lilien

The intermittent spring at the bottom of these steps was for centuries the only water supply for Jerusalem. Formerly, it flowed out of its cave on a level with the bottom of the Kidron Valley, but the rubbish of centuries raised the level of the valley until now one must descend some thirty feet to reach the spring. The water of this spring still flows through the crooked tunnel made in the days of King Hezekiah, empties first into the Pool of Siloam south of Jerusalem, then irrigates the gardens of onions and artichokes in the Kidron Valley lower down, where anciently were the pleasant gardens of King Solomon, and finally loses itself in the thirsty soil toward the Wilderness of Judea.

Then Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat: "Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord. Nevertheless, there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the sacred posts out of the land, and hast prepared thy heart to seek God."

JEHOSHAPHAT INSTRUCTS HIS JUDGES

Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem; and he went out again through the people from Beer-sheba to the hill country of Ephraim, and brought them back to the Lord God of their fathers.

And he set judges in the land throughout all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, and said to the judges: "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord; and he is with you in judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of bribes."

Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites and the priests, and of the heads of the fathers' houses of Israel, for the judgment of the Lord and for controversies. And they returned to Jerusalem.

And he charged them, saying: "Thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord faithfully, and with a perfect heart. And whatsoever cause shall come to you from your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, ye shall even warn them that they be not guilty towards the Lord, and so wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not be guilty.

"And behold, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the Lord; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites shall be officers before you. Deal courageously, and the Lord shall be with the good."

The King Prays for Help Against the Ammonites

Now Jehoshaphat joined affinity with Moab.

And it came to pass after this, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other besides the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle. Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, "There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea from Syria: and, behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar (which is En-gedi)."

SHORE OF THE DEAD SEA NEAR EN-GEDI

Courtesy of Professor G. L. Robinson, D.D.

A desolate sea unrelieved by passing sails; a desolate shore of pebbles and driftwood. The salt and other minerals in this dense water strip the bark from every tree and bush brought down by the Jordan, and leave their skeletons to bleach in the sun.

And Jehoshaphat was afraid, and set himself to seek unto the Lord; and he proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah gathered themselves together, to seek help of the Lord; even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.

Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court; and he said: "O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thy hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee." And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

SINGERS LEAD THE ARMY TO BATTLE

Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the spirit of the Lord in the midst of the assembly; and he said: "Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord to you: 'Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. Ye shall not need to fight in this battle; set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you.' "

And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshiping the Lord. And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korahites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high. And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said:

"Hear me, O Judah,
And ye inhabitants of Jerusalem:
Believe in the Lord your God,
So shall ye be established;

Believe in the Lord your God,
Believe his prophets,
So shall ye prosper."

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers to the Lord, who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and say:

"Praise the Lord!
For his mercy endureth forever."

JUDAH WINS A VICTORY WITHOUT FIGHTING

And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, who were come against Judah; and they were smitten. For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.

And when Judah came toward the watchtower in the wilderness, they looked to the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped. And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the booty of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the booty, it was so much.

And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Beracah [Blessing]; for there they blessed the Lord: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Beracah, to this day.

Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies. And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets to the house of the Lord.

And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel.

And there was no king in Edom: a deputy was king.

So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.

A Long and Happy Reign Comes to an End

Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.

Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat would not.

(Jehoshaphat had seven sons. Jehoram was the oldest and therefore the heir to the throne.)

And their father gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fortified cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram, because he was the first-born.

And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father.

JEHORAM

An Unworthy Son and His Miserable End

Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, and had strengthened himself, he slew all his brethren with the sword, and others also of the princes of Israel. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab; for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and since he had promised to give a lamp to him and to his children forever.

In his days Edom revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king. Then Jehoram went forth with his captains, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites that encircled him, and the captains of the chariots. So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah to this day.

At the same time also did Libnah revolt from under the hand of Jehoram, because he had forsaken the Lord God of his fathers.

Moreover he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and he led Judah astray.

Then there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying: "Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father: 'Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah, but hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to be false to the Lord, as the house of Ahab did, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, who were better than thyself: behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods."

Moreover the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians: and they came up into Judah, and broke into it, and carried away all the goods that were found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Ahaziah, the youngest of his sons.

And after all this the Lord smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease, and he died of sore diseases. And his people made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers.

Thirty-two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and he departed without being desired. Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchers of the kings.

AHAZIAH

A King Who Always Took Bad Advice

The inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah the youngest son [of Jehoram] king in his stead; for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. He reigned one year in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Athaliah the daughter of Ahab.

He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counselor to do wickedly. Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab; for they were his counselors after the death of his father, to his destruction. He walked also after their counsel, and went with

JEHORAM PIERCED BY AN ARROW
From a painting by James J. Tissot

Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram. And Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel because of the wounds which they had given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.

And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

Now the destruction of Ahaziah was of God, by his coming to Joram: for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the Lord had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab. And it came to pass, that, when Jehu was executing judgment on the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, ministering to Ahaziah, he slew them. And he sought Ahaziah.

(Ahaziah witnessed the killing of King Jehoram by Jehu, and in his own flight was mortally wounded.)

But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden-house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, "Smite him also in the chariot!" And they smote him at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there.

And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulcher with his fathers in the city of David: "Because," said they, "he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the Lord with all his heart."

And the house of Ahaziah had no power to hold the kingdom.

ATHALIAH

The Fierce Daughter of King Ahab of Israel Rules over Judah

A Little Prince Is Saved by a Princess

And when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she rose and destroyed all the royal family.

But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons that were slain, even him and his nurse, and put them in the bedchamber; and they hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not slain. And he was with her hid in the house of the Lord six years. And Athaliah reigned over the land.

And the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the Lord; and he made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the Lord.

And he showed them the king's son.

And he commanded them, saying: "This is the thing that ye shall do: A third part of you that enter in on the sabbath shall even be keepers of the watch of the king's house; and a third part shall be at the gate Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard: so shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it be not broken down. And two parts of all you that go forth on the sabbath, even they shall keep the watch of the house of the Lord about the king.

"And ye shall encircle the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and he that cometh within the ranks, let him be slain: and be ye with the king as he goeth out and as he cometh in."

And the captains over the hundreds did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. And to the captains over hundreds the priest gave king David's spears and shields, that were in the temple of the Lord. And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple.

The Lad Joash Is Proclaimed King

And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony.

And they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, "God save the king!"

DEATH OF ATHALIAH
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the Lord. And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner was, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, "Treason, treason!"

But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said to them: "Have her forth between the ranks; and him that followeth her kill with the sword." For the priest had said, "Let her not be slain in the house of the Lord."

And they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by which the horses came into the king's house: and there was she slain.

And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people.

And all the people of the land went into the house of Baal, and broke it down; his altars and his images broke they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the Lord.

And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the Lord, and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the kings.

And all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was in quiet. And they slew Athaliah with the sword beside the king's house.

JOASH

A King Who Began by Taking Good Advice and Ended by Taking Bad Advice

When Joash's father, Ahaziah, was murdered by Jehu, his grandmother Athaliah showed herself to be a true descendant of Jezebel by seizing the throne and killing, as she supposed, all of her son's children. Little Joash, however, only a year old, was rescued from assassination by his aunt, King Ahaziah's sister, who had married the high priest Jehoiada, and was reared by her in secret until the time should be ripe in Judah to treat the house of Ahab as it was treated in Israel. This time came six years later.

Jehoiada organized a revolt, enlisted the services of the palace guards, and, taking advantage of the hour when the guards were changed in the temple on the sabbath, had the young child brought forth and proclaimed king. Queen Athaliah heard the noise and the shouting. When she came to the temple court, she discovered the king standing on the platform, while the captains and the trumpeters were about him and the people were rejoicing in their new ruler. Thereupon she rent her clothes and cried, "Treason! Treason!" Jehoiada ordered the troops to take such a position that the queen would be forced to flee between their ranks to her own palace. The soldiers followed her and killed her.

Jehoiada himself naturally became the regent and tutor of the young king. Under his guidance the king purified the worship of Jehovah. They destroyed the houses of Baal that had sprung up under Athaliah's fostering care. They broke down the altars and the images and slew the high priest of Baal. Thus perished the evil that Jezebel and Jehu had wrought for Judah.

Little is mentioned in Scripture about the reign of Joash, except the invasion of the Assyrians that compelled him to pay a heavy tribute. This money he took from the temple treasury. Another incident shows a new tendency in religion. When Joash undertook to repair the temple, he discovered that the priests were profiting by the income of the sanctuary, but were quite unwilling to share in the expense of maintaining it. The priests had been receiving a portion of the offerings of the people on the express understanding that they should take care of the necessary repairs, but after twenty-three years it was found that no work had been done. Joash therefore made definite regulations by which certain classes of income should go by right to the priests, and certain others to the maintenance fund administered by laymen.

The incident shows that the temple at Jerusalem was no longer merely a royal shrine but was becoming a popular place of worship, and that the priests had become a powerful body with vested interests in that worship. Judah, even at this early date, was becoming churchly and priest-ridden as Israel never became. The power of the priest is no doubt shown by the fact that when Joash in the latter part of his reign somewhat relaxed his zeal for Jehovah-worship and put to death a son of the high priest who criticized him, he was promptly assassinated.

Joash Restores the Temple

Seven years old was Joash when he began to reign. In the seventh year of Jehu began Joash to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. And Joash did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord all his days as long as Jehoiada the priest instructed him. But the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to restore the house of the Lord. And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, "Go out to the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year; and see that ye hasten the matter." Howbeit the Levites hastened it not.

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DAVID STREET, JERUSALEM

Then the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said to him: "Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the collection of Moses the servant of the Lord, and of the assembly of Israel, for the tent of the testimony?" For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the Lord did they bestow upon the Baalim.

And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it outside at the gate of the house of the Lord. And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the Lord the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness. And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.

Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought to the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to its place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the Lord, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the Lord. So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in its state, and strengthened it.

And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made vessels for the house of the Lord, even vessels to minister, and to offer withal, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada.

Evil Counselors Influence the King

But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; a hundred and thirty years old was he when he died. And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, toward God, and toward his house.

Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened to them. And they left the house of the Lord God of their

RIVER ABANA AT DAMASCUS

This swiftly flowing stream is the water of life to Damascus. Without it there would be no oasis and without the oasis, no city. The melting snows of the Lebanons, particularly Mount Hermon, furnish the water supply. The stream twists down a narrow gorge filled with poplar trees, a gorge so narrow that in places there is hardly room for the stream, the carriage road and the railway; then reaching at last the plain, the waters fling themselves abroad fanwise through the canals and irrigation ditches that men have prepared for them. They nourish a huge garden of trees within which grow all manner of fruits—English walnuts, apricots, mulberries, almonds and lemons. There are clearer waters than the Abana, yet so much muddier is the Jordan that Naaman, the Syrian, might well say, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?"

fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass.

Yet God sent prophets to them, to bring them again to the Lord; and the prophets testified against them: but the people would not give ear. And the spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them: "Thus saith God: 'Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, so that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you.'"

And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord.[38]

Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, "The Lord look upon it, and require it."

Defeat and Death Follow the King's Ill-doing

And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the booty of them to the king of Damascus. For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the Lord delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash.

Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. And Joash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria: and then he went away from Jerusalem.

And when they were departed from him (for they left him in great diseases), his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchers of the kings. And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

AMAZIAH

A King Whose Pride Led to a Fall

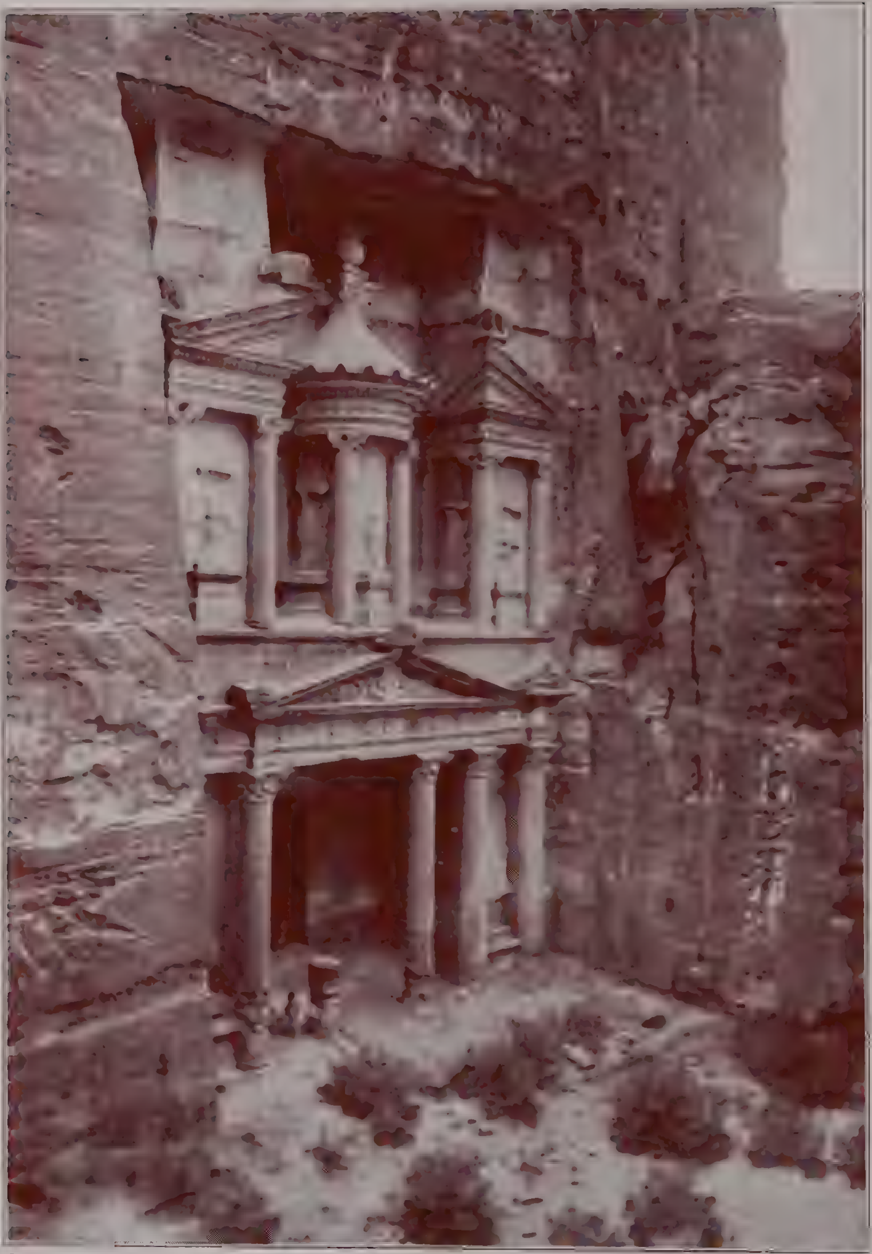
THE KING ANGERS HIS HIRED ARMY

Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.

Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was established to him, that he slew his servants that had killed the king his father. But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the Lord commanded, saying, "The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin."

Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them from twenty years old and above. He hired also a hundred thousand mighty men of valor out of Israel for a hundred talents of silver.

But there came a man of God to him, saying: "O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the Lord is not with Israel, with all the children of Ephraim. But if thou wilt go, do valiantly, be strong for the battle: God will make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down."



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II-231 ROCK TEMPLE AT PETRA IN EDOM, "THE LAND OF SEIR"

And Amaziah said to the man of God, "But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel?"

And the man of God answered, "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this."

Then Amaziah separated them, the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger.

Victory Leads the King to Idolatry

And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to the valley of Salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand. And other ten thousand left alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them to the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they all were broken in pieces.

But the soldiers of the army whom Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria even to Beth-horon, and smote of them three thousand, and took much spoil.

Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense to them.

Wherefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent to him a prophet, who said to him, "Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thy hand?"

And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said to him, "Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldst thou be smitten?"

Then the prophet forbore, and said, "I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened to my counsel."

AMAZIAH'S FOLLY ENDS IN HIS DOWNFALL

Amaziah was now so puffed up by his victory that he proposed a trial of strength with the armies of Jehoash, king of Israel. It was then that Jehoash in his scorn told him the fable of the thistle that wanted to marry the cedar and got trodden into the dust by a wild beast. Amaziah soon learned his lesson.

Now Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to his tent. And Joash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, four hundred cubits. And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of God with Obed-edom, and the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, fifteen years.

Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away from following the Lord they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there.

And they brought him upon horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.

UZZIAH

Besides the important achievements of this large-minded king's reign, it was signalized by an earthquake, mentioned in the Book of Zechariah long afterward, and referred to by Amos as a point from which to date events that followed.

UZZIAH IS A GREAT MILITARY LEADER

Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah.

He built Eloth, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Jecoliah of Jerusalem.

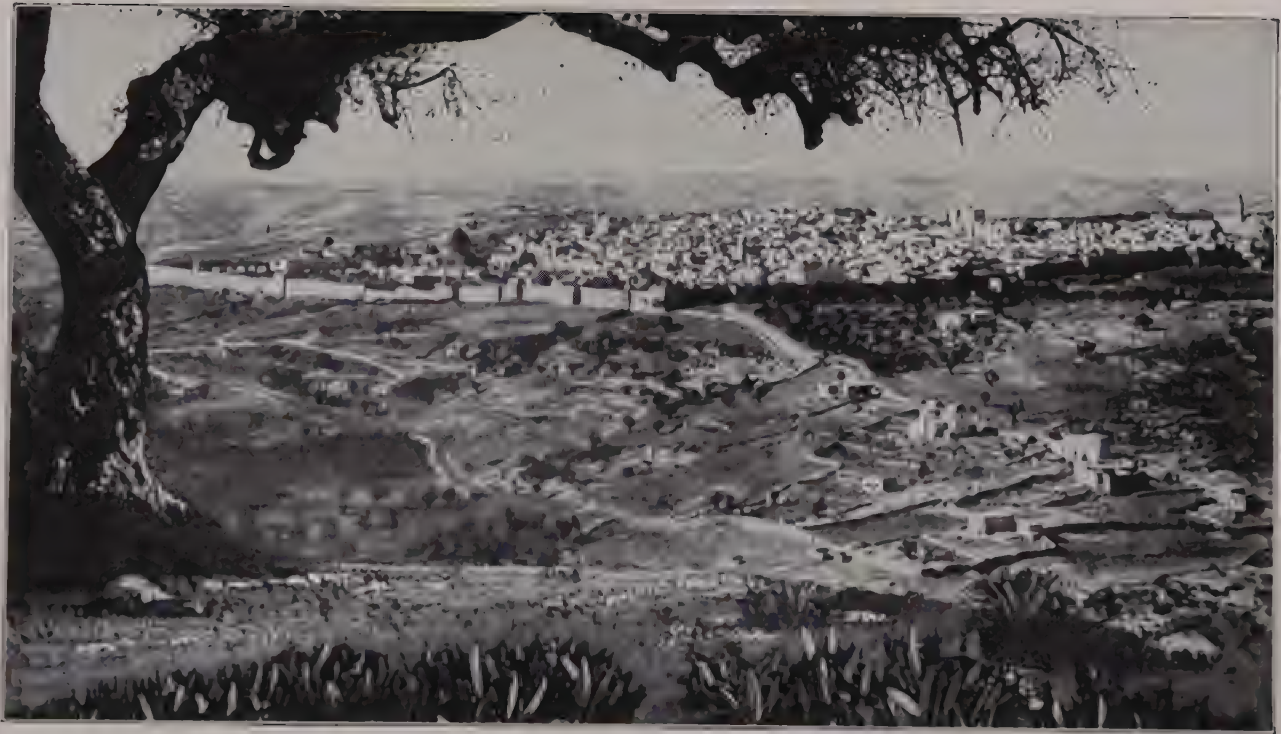
And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah did. And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper.

And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod; and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines. And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal, and the Meunim. And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened himself exceedingly.

Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate, and at the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them. Also he built towers in the desert, and dug many wells: for he had many cattle, both in the low country, and in the plains; husbandmen also, and vinedressers in the mountains, and in Carmel: for he loved husbandry. Moreover Uzziah had a host of fighting men, that went out to war by bands.

And Uzziah prepared for war, even for all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and coats of mail, and bows, and stones for slinging. And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by skilful men, to be on the towers and upon the battlements, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong.

But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction; for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and



JERUSALEM FROM MOUNT SCOPUS

This view is taken near the point where Titus pitched his camp in the days of the great destruction. Immediately below in the foreground is the beginning of the Valley of the Kidron. The highest point in the city is the top of Mount Zion—in Christ's day the aristocratic quarter of the city. At the left the beautiful octagonal building of the Dome of the Rock marks the site of the great altar in front of Solómon's Temple.

went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

Then the Lord smote the king, so that he was a leper to the day of his death. And he dwelt in a separate house. And Jotham the king's son was over the royal household, ruling the people of the land.

Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write. So Uzziah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, "He is a leper": and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

Isaiah's Messages to the People

(Isaiah, the greatest of the prophets, whom we are now to know, was a nobleman. He lived all his life in the Holy City. Isaiah was the confidant of kings, and spoke familiarly of the life of royal courts.

King Uzziah had probably been Isaiah's hero, and when the king died his young biographer took up the noble but difficult task of a statesman, and became the trusted adviser of the next three kings of Israel.)

And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here am I; send me." And he said: "Go and tell this people:

"'Hear ye indeed, but understand not;
And see ye indeed, but perceive not.'
Make the heart of this people fat,
And make their ears heavy,
And shut their eyes;
Lest they see with their eyes,
And hear with their ears,
And understand with their heart,
And turn, and be healed."

Then said I, "Lord, how long?" And he answered:

"Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant,
And the houses without man,

And the land be utterly desolate,
And the Lord have removed men far away,
And the forsaken places be many in the midst of
the land.
But in it shall be a tenth,
It shall in turn be eaten,
As a terebinth and as an oak,
Whose stock remaineth, when they are felled:
So the holy lineage shall be the stock thereof."

JOTHAM

Jotham is overshadowed by his great father, but during most of the latter's reign he was co-regent, on account of his father's infirmity. He was chiefly interested in building. He was evidently a loyal son.

Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.

And he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that his father Uzziah had done: howbeit he entered not into the temple of the Lord. And the people did yet corruptly.

He built the upper gate of the house of the Lord, and on the wall of Ophel he built much. Moreover he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers.

He fought also with the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them. And the children of Ammon gave him the same year a hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. So much did the children of Ammon render to him, in the second year, and in the third.

So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God.

And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David.

AHAZ

Counseled Faithfully by Isaiah, This King Acted Foolishly

JUDAH SUFFERS SEVERE REVERSES

Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, like David his father: for he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for the Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his own children in the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captive, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.

Isaiah's Advice to Ahaz

(The problem that Isaiah had to help solve was this: the weak, divided kingdom of the Hebrews was crowded in between the most powerful monarchies of the world, those of Assyria, of Damascus [the Syrians, or Arameans], and of Egypt. How was it possible to prevent his native country from being crushed?

The policy that always tempted the kings of Judah was to play shrewd politics, and by making clever alliances with whichever empire was strongest at the time, win assistance to keep the other enemies at a distance. Isaiah probably foresaw that the price to pay for this would be expensive; in fact, that his native land would be obliged to give up enormous tributes and become practically the vassal of whichever great power promised it safety. This is exactly what occurred.

Isaiah's plan was the opposite. "We are too weak to mingle with either the wars or the politics of these mighty nations," he said. "Let us keep as quiet as possible, attend to our own affairs, hope that they will ignore us, and above all, trust in the protection of the Lord, the God of hosts, the Holy One of Israel." The following lines should be remembered, because they sum up the whole policy of Isaiah's plan for Israel:

"Thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel:

" 'In returning and rest shall ye be saved;
In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.' "

The first opportunity that came to Isaiah to counsel King Ahaz, the grandson of Uzziah, was when the kingdom of Syria to the north joined with the northern kingdom of Israel to attack Judah. Isaiah had two boys with significant names. The older was named Shear-jashub, which means, "A remnant shall return." Taking him along, as a symbol, perhaps, of his message, he went to meet the king "at the end of the conduit at the upper pool," the most critical point in the defenses of the city. There he bade him "take heed, and keep quiet," fearing nothing because of those two "stumps of smoking firebrands," who hissed out their fury against Jerusalem. Behind them was nothing but ignorant vanity; while on Judah's side was the Lord of Hosts, the Keeper and Ruler of the universe.)

And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it.

And it was told the house of David, saying, "Syria is confederate with Ephraim."[39]

And Ahaz's heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.

Then said the Lord to Isaiah: "Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller's field; and say to him: 'Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be faint-hearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah: because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying, 'Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeel.'

"Thus saith the Lord God:

"If ye will not hold fast,
Verily ye shall not stand fast."

Isaiah's Use of a Symbolic Name

Moreover the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above."

But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, neither will I put the Lord to the test."

Then Isaiah said: "Hear ye now, O house of David: Is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: Behold, a young woman shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may grow to know how to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know how to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."

(That is, a child is to be born of a pious Hebrew mother, within a few months, and given the hopeful name "Immanuel" [God With Us]. By the time he knows how to distinguish the pleasant from the harmful,—within two or three years—Syria and Israel will have been laid waste, and Judah made free from their threats.

At this same time it seems that Isaiah performed a dramatic act before the people. He brought out his own new-born baby for them to see, and giving him a symbolic name, he used it to impress his message:)

Moreover the Lord said to me, "Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz."

And I took to me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

And the prophetess [Isaiah's wife] bore a son. Then said the Lord to me, "Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz [Swift Booty Speedy Spoil]. For before the child shall have knowledge to cry 'My father!' and 'My mother!' the riches of Damascus and the booty of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria."

(Then, as the people still refused to give heed, he "bound his testimony" in the hearts of his disciples, himself patiently waiting for the Lord to reveal his purpose in season.)

Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait for the Lord, who hideth his face from the house of

Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwelleth in mount Zion.

AHAZ BECOMES VASSAL TO ASSYRIA

In the meantime, Ahaz in panic had sent an embassy carrying gifts and promising tribute to the king of Assyria and pleading for help. Soon the Assyrians captured Damascus and overran Israel. So Isaiah's prophecy came true.

At that time did king Ahaz send to the kings of Assyria to help him. For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives. The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the lowland, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Aijalon, and Gederoth, and Soco with the towns thereof, and Timnah with the towns thereof, Gimzo also and the towns thereof: and they dwelt there.

For the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he cast away restraint in Judah, and trespassed sore against the Lord.

So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying: "I am thy servant and thy son. Come up, and save me from the hand of the king of Syria, and from the hand of the king of Israel, who rises against me."

Then Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria.

And the king of Assyria hearkened to him: and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin.

AHAZ WORSHIPS FOREIGN GODS

Ahaz has been called "the Judas of the Old Testament." In gratitude for this temporary truce he began to worship the Assyrian gods. He owed them little gratitude, for hereafter his country was hardly more than an Assyrian province.

VIEW IN DAMASCUS

Mohammed is said to have refused to enter Damascus because he was unwilling to set foot in Paradise before he died. When one views this city from the mountains to the north, it looks indeed like a Paradise, or to use another figure, the whole oasis looks like a "handful of pearls in a goblet of emeralds." Destroyed many times by fire, there are few vestiges left of the city's ancient splendor. One building only has any pretense of antiquity, the great mosque which was once a Christian church. This mosque occupies the site of the Temple of Rimmon where the king leaned upon the hand of Naaman, the Syrian, and "bowed himself in the house of Rimmon."

In the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord, this same king Ahaz. For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, who smote him: and he said, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me." But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.

And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and saw the altar that was at Damascus; and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof.

And Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made it against the coming of king Ahaz from Damascus.

And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar: and the king drew near to the altar, and offered thereon. And he offered his burnt offering and his meal offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings upon the altar.

And he brought also the brazen altar, which was before the Lord, from the forefront of the house, from between the altar and the house of the Lord, and put it on the north side of his altar.

And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest saying: "Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt offering, and the evening meal offering, and the king's burnt offering, and his meal offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their meal offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: but the brazen altar shall be for me to inquire by." Thus did Urijah the priest according to all that king Ahaz commanded.

Then king Ahaz cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down the sea from off the brazen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a pavement of stone. And the covered place for the sabbath that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he from the house of the Lord for the king of Assyria.

And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem: but they brought him not into the sepulchers of the kings of Israel.

Isaiah's Warning

(Isaiah could not keep silent when such folly was under way. Boldly in the streets of Jerusalem he told the citizens that this policy meant nothing else than that Judah would be the prey either of Egypt or of Assyria.)

It shall come to pass in that day,
That the Lord shall whistle for the fly that is in the
uttermost parts of the rivers of Egypt,
And for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.
And they shall come and rest, all of them,
In the desolate valleys and in the holes of the rocks,
And upon all thorns and upon all pastures.

Forasmuch as this people have rejected
The waters of Shiloah that go softly,
Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon
them
The waters of the River, strong and many,
Even the king of Assyria and all his glory:
And it shall pass through Judah;
But the stretching out of his wings
Shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

HEZEKIAH

Reformer and Defender of His Country

Hezekiah came to the throne in perilous times. His father had sold his kingdom to Assyria, and there seemed to be no course open but to pay tribute faithfully. This Hezekiah did for nine years. During this interval of peace Hezekiah improved the city of Jerusalem, strengthened the walls and fortifications, fitted up arsenals, and brought the waters of the spring

Gihon underneath the city of David to a new reservoir called Siloam within the city walls. He then began to yield to the intrigues of Egypt and Babylon, and but for Isaiah's warnings he would have involved his country in destruction.

On recovering from the sickness so dramatically described in the Bible, and because of a flattering embassy from Babylon, he joined a league of rebels in a revolt. Sennacherib fell upon them like a thunderbolt, captured and destroyed practically all of the cities of Judah, until at last he shut up "Hezekiah in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage," to use his own picturesque description.

Only two things saved Hezekiah's head and throne,—abject submission and an enormous indemnity. He stripped his treasury, his palace, the temple; he even took off the gold from the doors and pillars of the house of Jehovah. It was a fair sum of money—thirty talents of gold and three hundred talents of silver, equivalent in purchasing power today of $22,800,000. And besides, Hezekiah's own daughters and various others of his household had to go to swell the conqueror's harem at Nineveh. Sennacherib sent assurances that the city would be spared and withdrew his army. Hezekiah had thus saved his crown and his city, but practically nothing else. His former territory was divided among Sennacherib's Philistine vassals.

Following upon this disaster, Hezekiah undertook the great religious reforms which Micah and Isaiah had for years been preaching,—to undo the work of Jotham and Ahaz in corrupting the nation with Assyrian Baal-worship. He cleansed the temple, with shovels and scrubbing brushes as well as with prayers, reinstituted the Passover feast, destroyed all idols and other accompaniments of strange gods, the stone pillars, the poles on the high places, the altars and all the heathen symbols. It is probable also that he encouraged the writing or rewriting of portions of our Old Testament. Part of our Book of Proverbs is ascribed to his secretaries.

Subsequent to these reforms there seems to have been a second attack on Jerusalem by a division of Sennacherib's army. Through the courage and faith of Isaiah the city was saved, and Sennacherib returned to his own land, never again to invade Israel.

While from a religious and moral point of view the reign of Hezekiah is one of the most important, politically it was a tragedy. The kingdom of Judah had shrunk to a single city, and its wealth had been completely absorbed by the conqueror.

Hezekiah's First Measures Are Wise Reforms

Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of

POOL OF HEZEKIAH, JERUSALEM

The name of this pool recalls the memory of one of the greatest kings of Judah. Although it is not certain that Hezekiah built it, there is some evidence that water was brought to it in ancient times from the so-called "Upper Pool," one of Hezekiah's basins west of the city. Today Hezekiah's Pool is a noisome catch basin for rain, its chief value that of furnishing reflections and colors to delight the eye of the artist. It presents a quaint and colorful picture to those who chance to enter one of the narrow cafés off David street, and find in the rear a balcony window overhanging the water.

Judah began to reign. Twenty-five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did.

He removed the high places, and broke the images, and cut down the sacred posts, and broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made. For to those days the children of Israel burned incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan [A Piece of Brass].

And all the assembly of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the assembly that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced. So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem. Then the priests rose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard of the Lord, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even to heaven.

He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses.

And the Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not. He smote the Philistines, even to Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

Samaria Falls Before the Assyrians

And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah (which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel), that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it:[40] even in the sixth year of Hezekiah (that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel), Samaria was taken. And the king of Assyria carried away Israel to Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded, and would not hear it, nor do it.

Isaiah's Words of Warning and Hope

(We can imagine the anxiety that was abroad in Jerusalem in those days of the Assyrian approach. The distracted people turned to wizards and witchcraft for comfort. Isaiah thus rebuked them:)

When they shall say to you, "Seek unto the necromancers and the wizards, that chirp and that mutter," should not a people seek unto their God? On behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead? To the law and to the testimony!

(The stern messages by which Isaiah warned the people of Jerusalem to rouse themselves from their debaucheries and luxury are given in the section devoted to "Social Ideals," Volume Four. To these succeeded a gentler and more hopeful strain, in which the prophet foresaw that in the last extremity Jerusalem would be delivered:)

It shall come to pass
That I will break the Assyrian in my land,
And upon my mountains tread him under foot;
Then shall his yoke depart from off them,
And his burden depart from off their shoulders.

Isaiah Proclaims the Weakness of Egypt

In the year that the Tartan came to Ashdod (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him), and fought against Ashdod, and took it; at the same time spoke the Lord by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, "Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot." And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

And the Lord said: "Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia; so shall the king of Assyria lead away the

Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, uncovered, to the shame of Egypt. And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory. And the inhabitant of this coast land shall say in that day: 'Behold, such is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and now how shall we escape?'"

Egypt helpeth in vain, and to no purpose. Therefore have I called her "Rahab that sitteth still" [Madam Brag-and-Stay-at-Home].

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help;
And rely on horses,
And trust in chariots, because they are many;
And in horsemen, because they are very strong;
But they look not to the Holy One of Israel.
Now the Egyptians are men, and not God;
And their horses are flesh, and not spirit.
When the Lord shall stretch out his hand.
Both he that helpeth shall fall,
And he that is helped shall fall down,
And they shall all fall together.

For thus hath the Lord spoken to me:
"As the lion and the young lion, roaring over his prey,
Though a multitude of shepherds be called forth
against him,
Will not be afraid of their voice,
Nor abase himself for the noise of them:
So shall the Lord of hosts come down,
To fight for mount Zion,
And for the hill thereof.
Like birds in their hovering,
So will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem."

SENNACHERIB'S ARMY APPROACHES JERUSALEM

After these things, and this faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fortified cities, and thought to win them for himself.

And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, he took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were outside the city: and they helped him.

So there were gathered many people together, and they stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, "Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?"

And he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken down, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall outside, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made weapons and shields in abundance.

He set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the broad place at the gate of the city, and spoke encouragingly to them, saying: "Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there are more with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles."

And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them captive.[41]

Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong; return from me; that which thou puttest on me will I bear."

And the king of Assyria laid upon Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house. At that time Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

The Rabshakeh Tries to Terrify the People

Nevertheless the king of Assyria sent the Tartan, and the Rab-saris, and the Rabshakeh [three Assyrian military titles] from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem: and they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field. And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebnah the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.[42]

THE "RABSHAKEH" BEFORE THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM

From a drawing by Isings

Rabshakeh was a title, not the name of a person. It may mean "chief chamberlain." The "Tartan" who is with him was the commander in chief of the military forces. The speech of the Rabshakeh was intended to weaken the morale of the city and gain the ends of King Sennacherib by diplomacy rather than by war.

And the Rabshakeh said to them: "Speak ye now to Hezekiah: Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, 'What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest (but they are but vain words), I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust on him. But if ye say to me, We trust in the Lord our God: is not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?'

"Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. How then canst thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? Am I now come up without the Lord against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'"

Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebnah, and Joah, to the Rabshakeh: "Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and talk not with us in the Jews' language in the ears of the people that are on the wall."

But the Rabshakeh said to them: "Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men who sit on the wall with you?"

Then the Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spoke, saying: "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria: Thus saith the king: 'Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he will not be able to deliver you out of his hand.' And let not Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be given to the hand of the king of Assyria. Hearken not to Hezekiah! For thus saith the king of Assyria: 'Make peace with me by a present and come out to me; and eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his

Published by arrangement with George D. Sproul

From a painting by José Villegas

THE "RABSHAKEH" BLASPHEMES THE LORD

fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern: until I come and take you away to a land like your own land:

A land of grass and new wine,
A land of bread and of vineyards,
A land of olive oil and of honey,

that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not to Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, "The Lord will deliver us." Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah, that they should have delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?'"

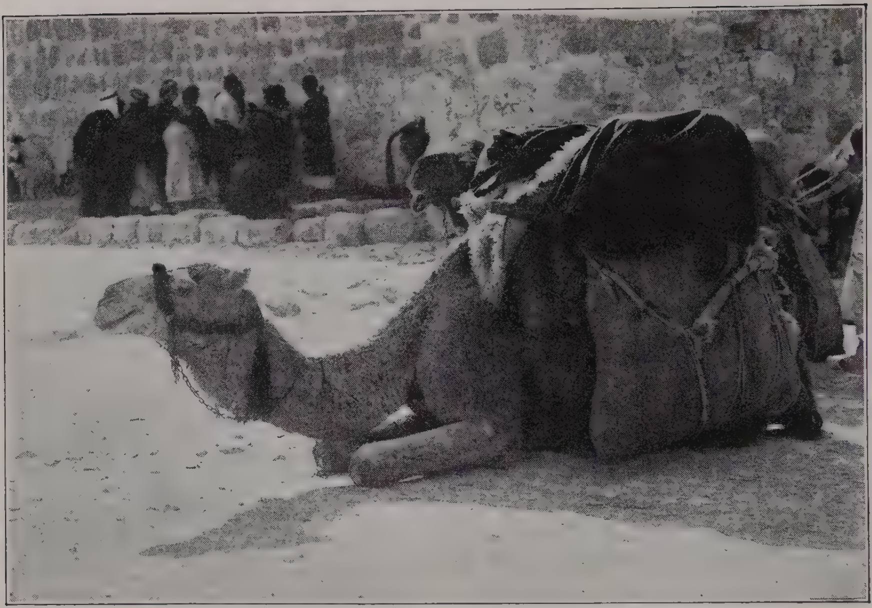
But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word. For the king's commandment was, saying, "Answer him not."

Isaiah Promises Deliverance

Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebnah the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.

And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebnah the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said to him: "Thus saith Hezekiah: 'This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of contumely. It may be the Lord thy God will hear all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to taunt the living God; and will rebuke the words which the Lord thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left.'"



CAMELS IN A STREET OF MODERN JERUSALEM

So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

And Isaiah said to them: "Thus shall ye say to your master, 'Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumor, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.'"

Then the Assyrians cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language to the people of Jerusalem that were on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city. And they spoke against the God of Jerusalem, as of the gods of the peoples of the earth, which were the work of men's hands.

So the Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah. Then he sent messengers again to Hezekiah. And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it. And Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord.

HEZEKIAH PRAYS FOR DELIVERANCE

And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said: "O Lord God of Israel, who dwellest between the cherubim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. Thou hast made heaven and earth. Lord, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, Lord, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib wherewith he reproached the living God. Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only."

Isaiah's Defiance of Assyria

Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, 'That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.' This is the word that the Lord hath spoken concerning him:

"'The virgin daughter hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn;
The daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.
Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed?
And against whom hast thou raised thy voice,
And lifted up thine eyes on high?
Even against the Holy One of Israel.
By thy messengers thou hast reviled the Lord,
And hast said:
With the multitude of my chariots
I am come up to the height of the mountains,
To the sides of Lebanon,
And will cut down the tall cedar trees thereof,
And the choice fir trees thereof:
And I will enter into its farthest height,

And into the forest of its fruitful field.
I have digged and drunk water,
And with the sole of my feet will I dry up
All the rivers of Egypt.

"'But I know thine abode,
And thy going out and thy coming in,
And thy rage against me.
Because thy rage against me
And thy tumult is come up into mine ears,
Therefore I will put my hook in thy nose,
And my bridle in thy lips,
And I will turn thee back by the way by which
thou camest.'"

The Assyrian Host Is Marvelously Destroyed

The news of a strong Ethiopian advance caused a hasty raising of the siege of Jerusalem. As Sennacherib marched south to meet the new enemy, the flower of his army perished of pestilence on the marsh land of Pelusium, while he himself had to beat a retreat homeward. Twenty years later he fell a victim to the treachery of his own sons.

And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies.[43]

So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all others, and guided them on every side. And many brought gifts to the Lord to Jerusalem, and precious things to Hezekiah king of Judah; so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations thenceforth.

THE KING IS CURED OF A GRAVE ILLNESS

In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.'"

Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed to the Lord, saying, "I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight." And Hezekiah wept sore.

And it came to pass, before Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying: "Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people: 'Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up to the house of the Lord. And I will add to thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.'"

And Isaiah said, "Take a lump of figs." And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.

And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day?"

And Isaiah said, "This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?"

And Hezekiah answered, "It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees."

And Isaiah the prophet cried to the Lord: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.

HEZEKIAH REJOICES WITH A PSALM OF THANKSGIVING

The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness:

I said, "In the noontide of my days I shall go to
    the gates of the grave:
I am deprived of the residue of my years."
I said, "I shall not see the Lord,
Even the Lord, in the land of the living:
I shall behold man no more,
With the inhabitants of the world.

"My dwelling is removed,
And is carried away from me as a shepherd's tent:
I have cut off, like a weaver, my life:
He will cut me off from the loom:
Between a day and a night wilt thou make an
    end of me."

I thought until morning:
"Like a lion, so will he break all my bones:
Between a day and a night wilt thou make an
    end of me."

Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter;
I mourned like a dove;
Mine eyes fail with looking upward:
"O Lord, I am oppressed: undertake for me!"
What shall I say? he hath both spoken to me,
And himself hath done it:
I shall go softly all my years,
In the bitterness of my soul.

O Lord, by these things men live,
And in all these things is the life of my spirit:

So wilt thou recover me,
And make me to live.
Behold, for peace I had great bitterness:
But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it
From the pit of destruction;
For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.
For the grave cannot praise thee,
Death cannot celebrate thee:
They who go down into the pit cannot hope for
thy faithfulness.
The living, the living, he shall praise thee,
As I do this day:
The father to the children shall make known thy
truth.
The Lord was ready to save me:
Therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed
instruments
All the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

Hezekiah's Pride Leads to Indiscretion

At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan king of Babylon sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered.

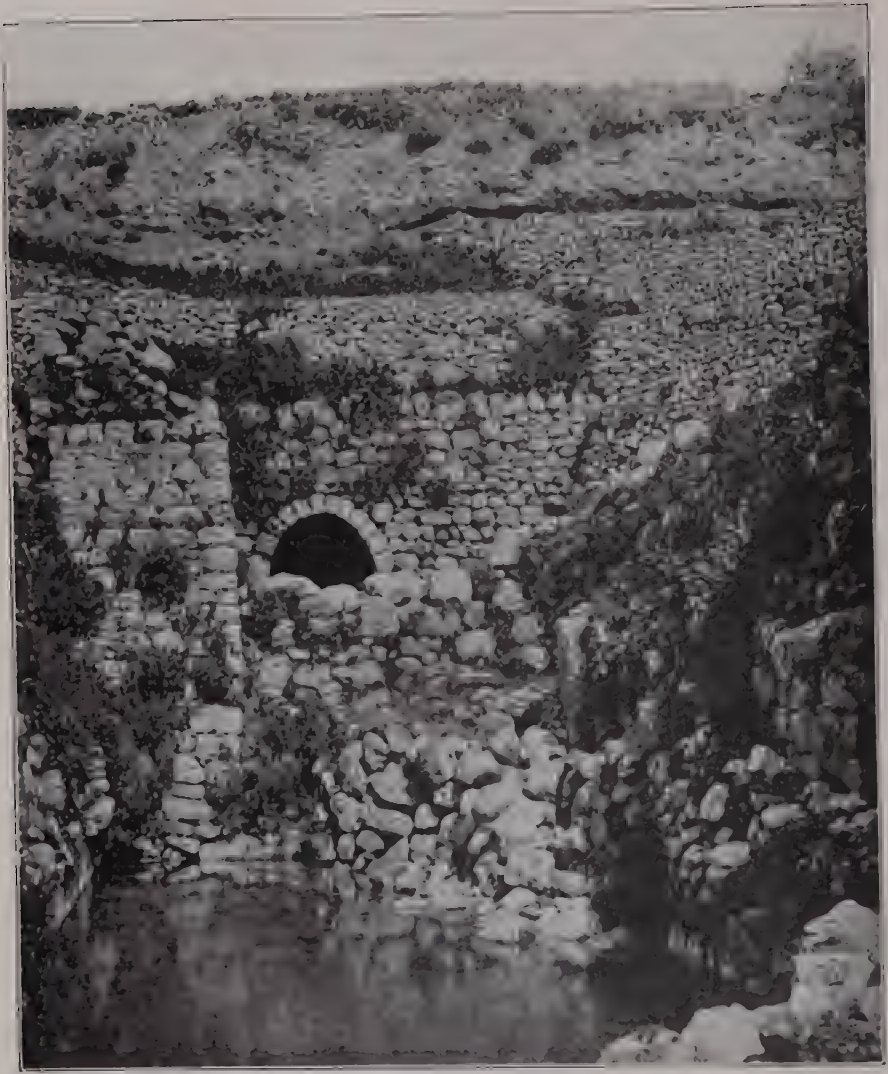
And Hezekiah was glad at them, and showed them his treasure house, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious oil, and his whole armory, and all that was in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah did not show them.

Then came Isaiah the prophet to king Hezekiah, and said to him, "What said these men? and from whence came they to thee?"

And Hezekiah said, "They are come from a far country to me, even from Babylon."

Then said he, "What have they seen in thy house?"

And Hezekiah answered, "All that is in my house have



THE POOL OF SILOAM, JERUSALEM

This is all that is left of the splendid pool built by Hezekiah, which was once lined with marble and surrounded by a sumptuous marble colonnade. The rubbish of the sixteen destructions that Jerusalem has suffered, forms the immense hill behind the pool. Some day the excavators will clear away this rubbish and we shall find under the archway the remains of a beautiful church built in the sixth century. We shall find the remains of the marble porches, the paved staircase street that leads down to them from Mount Zion, and many other interesting relics of the checkered history of this queen of cities. The water in this basin comes through a crooked tunnel from the Virgin's Fountain on the other side of the hill.

they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them."

Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah: "Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: 'Behold, the days come, that all that is in thy house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons shall they take away; and they shall be attendants in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"

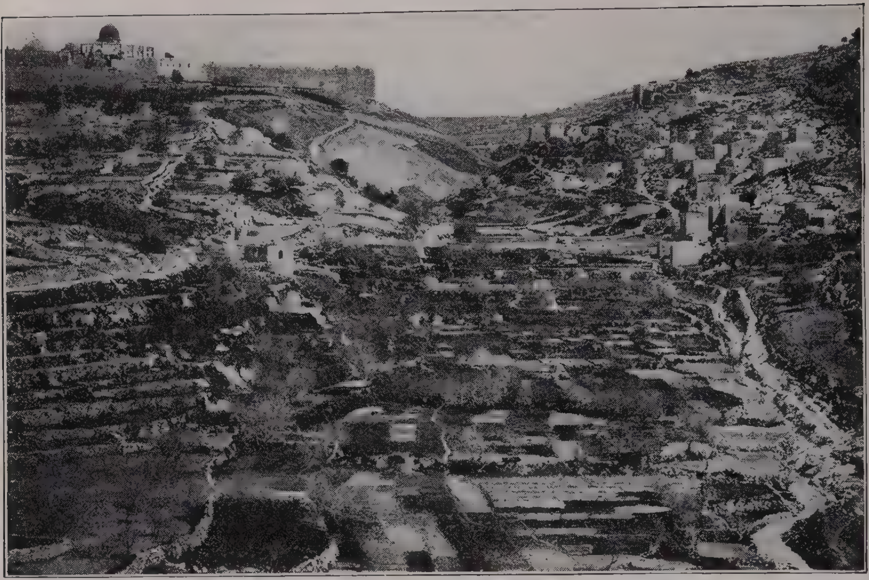
Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, "Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken." He said moreover, "For there shall be peace and truth in my days."

Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honor: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; storehouses also for the increase of grain and wine and oil, and stalls for all manner of cattle, and folds for flocks. Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for God had given him very much substance. This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper spring of the waters of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.

Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent to him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.

Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit,[44] and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchers of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honor at his death.



THE KING'S GARDEN IN THE VALLEY OF HINNOM

A most unpromising site for a garden!—a valley of rubbish, wedged in between two hills. On the right is the rocky and barren slope of Olivet with the houses of the wretched village of Siloam; on the left is the softer hill of earth that covers the rocky crag on which the Jebusites once built their fortress. This hill is now crowned with the walls of modern Jerusalem. David's city lay wholly between the spectator and these walls, on the hill where the olive trees now appear.

Jerusalem has been destroyed sixteen times and as many times rebuilt. It is the débris of these destructions that forms the soil of the Valley of Hinnom. This débris is anywhere from twenty to one hundred feet deep. The diligent peasants have picked out the stones and made of them terrace walls that rise above one another, well up the slope of the hill. Behind these walls the soil is collected, water for irrigation is brought in little channels from the Virgin's Fountain almost in the center of this picture—in the left-hand angle of the valley where the bright path comes down the slope and disappears. In these little garden patches the peasants raise artichokes, onions, lettuce and melons.

This is the valley up which Solomon rode to be proclaimed king, and it was probably by this same route that the boy king Joash was brought to his coronation. Solomon's own house and royal courts filled the space south of the wall at our left, and their ruins are buried a hundred feet beneath the surface. It was here that Solomon is said to have planted his gardens and thus given the name to the valley; and here he instituted his idolatrous worship which gave to the valley its later sinister reputation.

Nor content with such
Audacious neighborhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant Valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.

—From "Paradise Lost," by Milton

Micah's Exposure of Corruption

(Living at this time and in the very track of the Assyrian invasion, between Philistia and Jerusalem, was another prophet, named Micah. He seems to have coöperated with Isaiah. Creditable as was the work of King Hezekiah, yet there were many abuses that he overlooked or could not abolish.

This fearless prophet exposed the terrible iniquity that was in Jerusalem in his days, when the magistrates were corrupted by bribes and even the priests prophesied for money.)

Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob,
And princes of the house of Israel,
Who abhor justice, and pervert all equity.
They build up Zion with blood,
And Jerusalem with iniquity;
The heads thereof judge for a bribe,
And her priests teach for hire.
And the prophets thereof divine for money;
And yet they lean on the Lord, and say,
"Is not the Lord among us?
No evil can come on us."
Therefore Zion for your sake shall be plowed like a field,
And Jerusalem shall become heaps,
And the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.

If a man walking in a spirit of falsehood do lie,
Saying, "I will prophesy unto thee of wine and strong drink,"
He shall even be the prophet of this people!

Woe to those who devise iniquity,
And work out evil on their beds!
When the morning is light, they practise it,
Because it is in the power of their hand.
And they covet fields, and take them by violence:
And houses, and take them away:
So they oppress a man and his house,
Even a man and his heritage.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

—*Lord Byron*

MANASSEH

Manasseh ruled for more than half a century. By putting policy before principle and regularly paying tribute to Assyria, he was prosperous and was protected from petty warfare with his neighbors. He tried to conciliate everybody by welcoming all forms of worship to Jerusalem. When he finally rebelled against Assyria, he was promptly subdued and taken for a time to Babylon as a prisoner. This seems to have brought him to his senses.

"HE WROUGHT MUCH EVIL"

Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem: but he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, like the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for the Baalim, and made sacred posts, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them. Also he built altars in the house of the Lord, whereof the Lord had said, "In Jerusalem shall my name be forever." And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a divining spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.

And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son: "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name forever: neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; if they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses."

Manasseh Is Rebuked and Punished

Then the Lord spoke by his servants the prophets, saying: "Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, who were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols; therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Israel: 'Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab; and I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down. And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies; because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even to this day.' "

Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to the other; besides his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.

(Among those prophets who spoke out the message of the Lord, we may be sure that one of the bravest was the old prophet Isaiah; and of the innocent blood that Manasseh shed, none was more innocent and none more noble than that of this princely prophet, who is believed to have suffered death in the Holy City.)

So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than did the heathen, whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel.

And the Lord spoke to Manasseh, and to his people: but they gave no heed. Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh in chains, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

HE PROVES HIS PENITENCE BY REFORMING

And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. And he prayed to him: and the Lord was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.

Now after this he built a wall outside the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish gate, and encircled Ophel with it, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah.

And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city. And he repaired the altar of the Lord, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel. Nevertheless the people sacrificed still in the high places, yet to the Lord their God only.

Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers that spoke to him in the name of the Lord God of Israel, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel. His prayer also, and how God was entreated of him, and all his sins, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built high places, and set up sacred posts and graven images, before he was humbled; behold, they are written among the sayings of the seers.

So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

Jeremiah's Denunciation

I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.

For who shall have pity on thee, O Jerusalem,
Or who shall bemoan thee?
"Thou hast forsaken me," saith the Lord;
"Thou art gone backward:
Therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee,
And I will destroy thee."

AMON

Two parties now divided the kingdom: one following the prophets in denouncing idolatry and holding to the temple as the only place for rightful worship, the other clinging to the old "high places" with their abominations. Manasseh had represented the latter party, and Amon followed in his steps. What was originally a religious issue was now political. In the conflict the king was slain, his assassins punished, and his little son enthroned, under the care of advisers who stood for faithfulness to Jehovah.

Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as did Manasseh his father. And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshiped them. And he forsook the Lord God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the Lord.

And the servants of Amon conspired against him, and put the king to death in his own house. And he was buried in his sepulcher in the garden of Uzza. And Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

JOSIAH

A Boy King of Fine Spirit Comes to Judah's Throne

Josiah came to the throne a mere child of eight. Some one associated with the party of the prophets who had been so bitterly persecuted under the former king Manasseh managed to get control of the little king;

possibly Zephaniah, who wrote the book of that name. The young king was therefore trained to the viewpoint of the true worshipers of Jehovah, so that by the time he was of age he was actively leading in religious reform.

One of the first acts of Josiah's reign was to repair the temple which had for years been sadly neglected. During these repairs on the temple a most fortunate find was made, a law book written perhaps in the preceding reign and laid up here against more fortunate times. It was a revised version of the law of Moses, one that breathed the spirit of the great prophets of Judah. In the opinion of modern scholars it constituted essentially the oldest portions of our Book of Deuteronomy, chapters twelve to nineteen. The king was impressed with its wonderful spirit of enlightened morality and promptly ordered that it be put in force.

The result was a thoroughgoing reformation. Jerusalem was completely cleansed of the idolatrous devices that Manasseh had introduced. Everything was burnt; the ashes were scattered in polluted places; the queen of heaven, the bronze horses and chariots of the sun, the roof altars, the houses of the Sodomites and all other shrines of foreign deities were ground to powder. All the high places that had been in existence and in active operation throughout the country were destroyed and their priests brought to Jerusalem to minister as subordinate officials in the temple of Jehovah. The Passover was made a great national pilgrimage festival to be celebrated henceforth only in Jerusalem; and, best of all, in the dealings of man with man, the great principle of good will was urged as the panacea for all Judah's social and moral ills. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

In his political relations, Josiah was strictly loyal to his Assyrian overlord. Even though the power of Nineveh was on the wane and the air was full of rumors of impending change in the government of the world, Josiah still paid his tribute. His loyalty went even further, and it cost him his life. When Necho II attempted to attack the slowly dying Assyria and seize what he could of its crumbling empire, Josiah confronted him at Megiddo and tried to stop his passage. But Josiah's poorly trained handful of troops was no match for the disciplined Greek soldiers that Necho had hired, and Josiah was killed by an arrow in the first skirmish.

Thus perished in the performance of his duty the best beloved ruler Judah ever knew.

A Righteous Reign Is Begun

The people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the sacred posts, and the graven images, and the molten images.

And they broke down the altars of the Baalim in his presence; and the images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the sacred posts, and the carved images, and the molten images, he broke in pieces, and made dust of them, and strewed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed to them. And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even to Naphtali, in their ruins round about. And when he had broken down the altars and the sacred posts, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

Josiah Repairs the Temple

It came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the Lord, saying: "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the Lord, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people: and let them deliver it into the hand of the workmen that have the oversight of the house of the Lord, and let them give it to the workmen that are in the house of the Lord, to repair the breaches of the house; to carpenters, and builders, and masons; and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house." Howbeit, there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand; for they dealt faithfully.

An Old Book Has a Mighty Influence

And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law[45] in the house of the Lord!" And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

Then Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said: "Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen that have the oversight of the house of the Lord." And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king.

And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying: "Go ye, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened to the words of this book, to do according to all that which is written concerning us."

So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the second quarter); and they communed with her.

And she said to them: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, 'Thus saith the Lord: Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and it shall not be quenched.' But to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him: 'Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: As touching the words which thou hast heard; because thy heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord when thou heardest what I spoke against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. Therefore, behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.'" And they brought the king word again.

Then the king sent, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up to the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord.

And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.

The King Destroys Idolatry

Then the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the sacred post, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them outside Jerusalem

MOLECH
From a painting by John S. Sargent

in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them to Beth-el.

And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense to Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. And he brought out the sacred post from the house of the Lord, outside Jerusalem, to the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people.

And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beer-sheba; and he broke down the high places of the gates that were at the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on a man's left hand at the gate of the city. Nevertheless the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem; but they ate unleavened bread among their brethren.

And he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech. And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entrance of the house of the Lord, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire. And the altars that were on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, the king tore down, and broke them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron. And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, the king defiled. And he broke in pieces the images, and cut down the sacred posts, and filled their places with the bones of men.

Josiah's Reforms Extend to Desolated Samaria

Moreover the altar that was at Beth-el, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the sacred post. Also all the houses of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them as he had done at Beth-el. And he slew all the priests of the high places, who were there, upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchers that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchers, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

Then he said, "What inscription is that that I see?"

And the men of the city told him, "It is the sepulcher of the man of God, who came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el."

Then he said, "Let him alone; let no man move his bones." So they let his bones alone.

And the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant." Surely there was not kept such a passover as this since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel nor of the kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of king Josiah this passover was kept to the Lord in Jerusalem.

Moreover the mediums, and the wizards, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. And like to him there was no king before him who turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose any like him.

The Law Pronounces Against Idolatry

The book that had been found was part of the Book of Deuteronomy, and the laws within it inspired Josiah to his reforms.

These are the statutes and judgments which ye shall observe in the land which the Lord God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth: Ye shall utterly destroy all the places in which the nations that ye shall dispossess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: and ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their sacred posts with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods; and ye shall destroy their name out of that place. Ye shall not do as they do to the Lord your God.

Thou shalt not plant a sacred post, which thou shalt make of any kind of tree, beside the altar of the Lord thy God; neither shalt thou set up a pillar, which the Lord thy God hateth.

If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee, a man or a woman that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his covenant, and hath gone and served other gods, and worshiped them, or the sun, or the moon, or the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; and it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, then shalt thou inquire diligently; and if it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination hath been wrought in Israel: then shalt thou

ASHTORETH

From a painting by John S. Sargent

The artist has pictured the voluptuous beauty of this Phoenician goddess—the Asiatic Venus. She is surrounded by the filmy vestures of her priestesses who dance and shake their sistrums in a frenzy of worship. Because of the sensuous character of her ritual and its strong appeal to the Hebrews, the prophets uttered against her their most impassioned warnings and condemnations. At its worst, the worship of the "Queen of Heaven" degenerated into immorality; at its best, it had to do with astronomy and patriotism.

bring forth that man or that woman, who hath committed that wicked thing, to thy gates, even that man or that woman; and thou shalt stone that person to death. At the mouth of two or three witnesses shall he who is condemned be put to death. At the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be raised first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hands of all the people. So shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

Zephaniah's Warning Against Indifference

(In the days of Josiah prophets again began to speak, and they encouraged King Josiah in his work of reform. One of these was Zephaniah. Zephaniah was probably a prince of the royal blood, for he was a descendant of the good King Hezekiah, and was second cousin to King Josiah. Possibly he had been the young king's tutor. He was indeed a brave man who, living perhaps in the very palace of the king, could publish these stern words about the vices of its courtiers, and even of the king's sons themselves. Because of a phrase in this quotation, Zephaniah is usually portrayed in sacred art carrying a candle.)

The day of the Lord is at hand;
The Lord hath prepared a sacrifice,
He hath consecrated his guests.
And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice,
That I will punish the princes, and the king's children,
And all such as are clothed with foreign apparel.
In the same day also will I punish all those that leap over the threshold,
That fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

And it shall come to pass at that time,
That I will search Jerusalem with candles,
And I will punish the men that are settled on their lees:
That say in their heart,
"The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil."
Therefore, their goods shall become a booty;
And their houses a desolation:
They shall also build houses, but not inhabit them;
They shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.

Jeremiah's Appeal

(Jeremiah, the second and more famous prophet, was one of the great men of the Bible. Never understood during his long life, he has never been fully appreciated since. His lot was to preach during the times of Judah's decline and ruin. His thankless message was to rebuke a faithless and discouraged people, and to try to teach them that if they could not survive as a nation, they could nevertheless be faithful to their God, and find their future in loyally keeping his covenant.

Jeremiah came of a priestly family. His ancestral home was in the little village of Anathoth, a few miles north of Jerusalem. When Josiah began his reforms, Jeremiah seems to have gone out among the villages and in the streets of Jerusalem, and urged the people to accept this covenant. But his message won him only hatred and persecution, even in his own native town. It was also revealed to him by God that he was to live a lonely life, to take no wife, and to abstain from all the joys and festivities of his nation, so as to continue his sacred task.)

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: "Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and say to them, 'Thus saith the Lord God of Israel:

"'Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all that I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God: that I may perform the oath which I swore to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day.'"

Then answered I, and said, "So be it, O Lord!"

And the Lord said to me, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, 'Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them.'"

Then said they, "Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words."

And the Lord said to me, "A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

And the Lord gave me knowledge of it, and I knew it: then thou showedst me their doings.

Jeremiah's Complaint

But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter;
And I knew not that they devised devices against me, saying:
"Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof,
And let us cut him off from the land of the living,
That his name may be no more remembered."
But, O Lord of hosts, that judgest righteously,
That triest the thoughts and the heart,
To thee have I committed my cause.

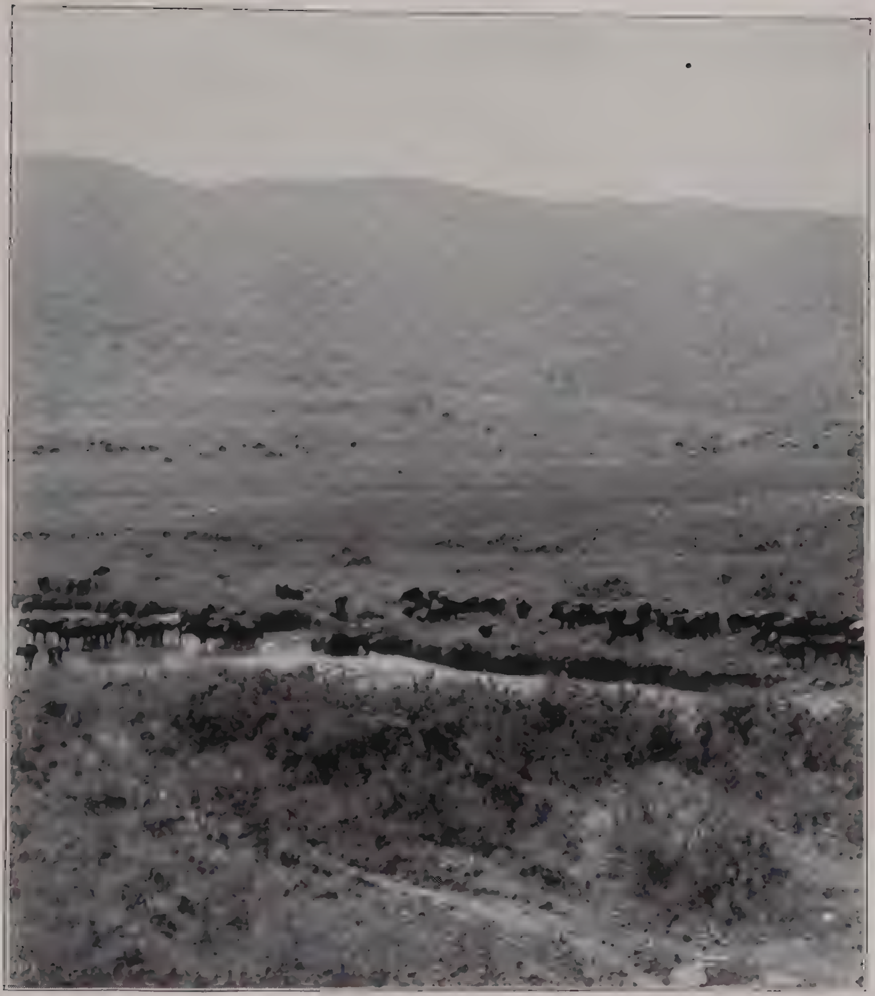
The word of the Lord came also to me, saying, "Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place. Thou shalt not go into the house of feasting, to sit with them to eat and to drink. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride."

Woe is me, my mother!
That thou hast borne me, a man of strife,
And a man of contention to the whole earth!
Every one curseth me.

O Lord, thou knowest,
Remember me, and visit me.
Know that for thy sake I have suffered reproach.
Thy words were found, and I ate them;
And thy word was to me a joy,
And the rejoicing of my heart.
I sat not in the assembly of the mirthful, and rejoiced;
I sat alone, because of thy hand.

JOSIAH'S DEATH IN THE SERVICE OF HIS COUNTRY

After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt went up to fight against Carchemish by the Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him. But he



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NORTHWESTERN LIMIT OF THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON

In front of us is Mount Carmel. Behind us the hills of Galilee come creeping down till they almost touch Carmel. The Plain of Esdraelon is the only clear opening from the Jordan to the Mediterranean. Being the one really large, level space in Syria, its rich soil and plentiful water supply make it a famous piece of cultivated ground. It is also the natural battlefield of this section, and its chief associations are not with agriculture but with war. The last little hillock on the extreme right of the picture is crowned by the tiny village of Harosheth, which served as the rendezvous of the nine hundred charioteers of Sisera. Also to the right flows out into the coastal plain of Acre the River Kishon, which bore to the sea the bodies of the priests of Baal who were slain by Elijah. Near here is the place where Josiah was killed in a battle against Pharaoh-necho of Egypt.

sent ambassadors to him, saying: "What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war; and God hath given command to speed me: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not."

Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not to the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, "Have me away; for I am sore wounded."

His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had, and they brought him to Jerusalem; and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchers of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

Now Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and singing women spoke of Josiah in their dirges; and they made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the dirges.

Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his good deeds, according to that which is written in the law of the Lord, and his acts, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

JOSIAH

The remembrance of Josiah
Is like the composition of incense
That is made by the art of the apothecary;
It is sweet as honey in all mouths,
And as music at a banquet of wine.
He behaved himself uprightly in the conversion of the people,
And took away the abominations of iniquity.
He directed his heart unto the Lord.
And in the time of the ungodly he established the worship of God.

—From "The Praise of Famous Men," by Sirach

JEHOAHAZ

A King Dies in Captivity

Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And Pharaoh-necho put him in bonds at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and imposed on the land a tribute of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold.

And Pharaoh-necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of Josiah his father, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away with him; and he came to Egypt, and died there. And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh. He taxed the land, however, to give the money demanded by Pharaoh. He exacted the silver and the gold from the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, in order to give it to Pharaoh-necho.

Jeremiah's Forecast of the King's Death

Weep not for the dead, neither bemoan him:
But weep sore for him that goeth away:
For he shall return no more,
Nor see his native country.

For thus saith the Lord concerning Shallum [Jehoahaz] the son of Josiah, who reigned instead of Josiah his father, who went forth out of this place: "He shall not return thither any more: but he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more."

JEHOIAKIM

A Reign During Which the Prophets Protest Against Oppression and Injustice

Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done.

In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up. And Jehoiakim became his servant three years; then he turned and rebelled against him.

And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldeans, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the sons of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it. Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did; and also for the innocent blood that Jehoiakim shed; for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood.

So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers; and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place.

JEREMIAH'S OPPOSITION TO THE KING

Jeremiah strongly disapproved the policies of Jehoiakim. The narratives that follow tell how the prophet made his opposition felt and how the king and his followers tried in vain to silence and thwart him.

Jeremiah Foretells the Destruction of Jerusalem

Thus saith the Lord: "Go, and get a potter's earthen bottle, and take some of the elders of the people, and of the elders of the priests; and go out to the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is before the entrance of the potter's gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee.

"Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee, and shalt say to them: 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts:

"'Even so will I break this people and this city,
As one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot
be made whole again.'"

Jeremiah Is Saved from Death

The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord.

And it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak to all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people seized him, saying, "Thou shalt surely die. Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant?'" And all the people were gathered to Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.

When the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the Lord; and they sat down at the entrance of the new gate of the Lord's house. Then spoke the priests and the prophets to the princes and to all the people, saying, "This man is worthy of death; for he prophesied against this city, as ye heard with your ears."

Then spoke Jeremiah to all the princes and to all the people, saying: "The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. But as for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as seemeth good and right to you."

Then said the princes and all the people to the priests and to the prophets, "This man is not worthy of death, for he hath spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God."

Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying, "Micah the Morashtite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying: 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts:

"'Zion shall be plowed like a field,
And Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins,
And the mountain of the house as the high
places of a forest.'

"Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah indeed put him to death? did they not fear the Lord, so that the Lord repented of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil to our souls."

But the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death. Also Pashhur the son of Immer the priest, who was chief officer in the house of the Lord, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things. Then Pashhur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper gate of Benjamin, that was in the house of the Lord. And it came to pass on the morrow that Pashhur took Jeremiah out of the stocks.

Jeremiah's Warnings Are Read to the King

And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: "Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken to thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to thee, from the days of Josiah, even to this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do to them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, which he had spoken to him, upon a roll of a book.

And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying: "I am shut up; I cannot go into the house of the Lord. Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the Lord in the ears of the people in the Lord's house upon the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities. It may be they will present their supplication before the

Lord, and will return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that the Lord hath pronounced against this people."

And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the Lord in the Lord's house, in the upper court, in the ears of all the people.

(Upon a fast day Baruch read the message of Jeremiah publicly. Some of the princes heard of it, and thought the words of the prophet important enough to be called to the king's attention.)

Then said the princes to Baruch, "Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye are."

And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king.

So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll; and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber.

BARUCH

From a drawing by Simeon Solomon

Baruch shines by reflected light. He was the disciple and secretary of the prophet Jeremiah, compiling his writings perhaps in the form now given them in the Bible. According to tradition he followed his master to Egypt, where together they suffered martyrdom at the hands of their own countrymen.

And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.

THE KING BURNS JEREMIAH'S MANUSCRIPT

Now the king sat in the winter-house in the ninth month; and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him.

And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, the king cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth. Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll; but he would not hear them.

But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet; but the Lord hid them.

Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides to them many like words.

Jeremiah's Denunciation of Jehoiakim

Woe to him who buildeth his house by unrighteousness,
And his chambers by wrong;
Who useth his neighbor's service without wages,
And giveth him not for his work;
Who saith, "I will build me a wide house with large chambers";
And cutteth him out windows;
And it is ceiled with cedar and painted with vermilion.
Shalt thou reign because thou enclosest thyself in cedar?
Did not thy father eat and drink, and execute judgment and
justice?

Then it was well with him.
"Was not this to know me?" saith the Lord.
But thine eyes and thy heart are only for thy covetousness,
And to shed innocent blood,
And for oppression, and for violence to do it.

Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah:

"They shall not lament for him, saying, 'Ah my brother!' or, 'Ah sister!'
They shall not lament for him, saying, 'Ah lord!' or, 'Ah his glory!'
He shall be buried with the burial of an ass,
Drawn and cast out beyond the gates of Jerusalem."

Nahum's Poem, The Fall of Nineveh

(As Manasseh's long reign drew to its close, the Assyrian empire, the age-long oppressor of Israel, was declining, and the Medes were threatening the gates of Nineveh, its capital. Then Nahum, born, it is believed, in the southern kingdom not far from the home of Micah, rose and sang a song of Nineveh's destruction, in which the accumulated bitterness and hatred of Judah for a hundred years were poured forth. His poem consists mostly of an imaginative description of the siege, capture, and utter ruin of the city, which is so graphic that we can almost see the scarlet-armed Median soldiers, the chariots dashing through the streets, the terror of the conquered citizens, and the deathly stillness after the destruction is over. The name Nahum means "comforter," and in a stern way those forecasts of Nineveh's fall were a consolation to anxious Jerusalem.)

The Besiegers Approach

He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face!
Keep the fortress!
Watch the way!
Make thy loins strong!
Fortify thy power mightily!
The shield of his mighty man is made red,
The valiant men are in scarlet:
The chariots are like flaming torches in the day of his preparation.
And the cypress spears are brandished.

The chariots rage in the streets,
They jostle one against another in the broad ways;
They seem like torches,
They run like the lightnings.

The Queen Is Captured

He calleth to his nobles:
They stumble in their walk;
They make haste to the wall,
And the defense is prepared.
The river gates shall be opened,
And the palace shall be dissolved.
And it is decreed:
She shall be carried away captive.
She shall be brought up.
And her maids shall lead her as with the voice of doves,
Tabering upon their breasts.

The Battle Rages in the Streets

The noise of a whip!
And the noise of the rattling of the wheels!
And of the prancing horses,
And of the jumping chariots!
The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword
And the glittering spear.
There is a multitude of slain,
And a great number of corpses;
They stumble upon their corpses.

The City Is Plundered

"Stand! stand!" they cry;
But none looketh back.
"Take ye the spoil of silver,
Take ye the spoil of gold:
For there is no end of the store,
The glory of all goodly furniture."
She is empty, and void, and waste:

BY THE RUINS OF NINEVEH'S WALL

Miles of mounds now hide the splendors of Nineveh, the oldest and greatest capital of Assyria. Her proud walls fell under the blows of Babylon and Media in the year 606 B.C. Since that day she has been without inhabitants even as Zephaniah predicted: "And he will stretch out his hand against the north and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation and dry like the wilderness."

During the nineteenth century the palaces of Sennacherib, Ashurbanipal and Esarhaddon were uncovered and those priceless tablets were found which have restored to us the details of Assyrian and Babylonian history.

And the heart melteth, and the knees smite together,
And pain is in all loins,
And the faces of them all gather blackness.

The Sleep of Death Is upon the Ruins

Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria:
Thy nobles dwell in the dust;
Thy people are scattered upon the mountains,
And no man gathereth them.
There is no healing of thy bruise;
Thy wound is grievous:
All that hear the tidings of thee clap hands over thee.
For upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

Habakkuk's Perplexity

(After Nineveh's fall and before it was certain what the outcome would be, there came a prophet, a Levite, who spoke forth Judah's perplexity. "How long," he cries out to God, "shall thy people suffer? These conquerors of Nineveh are apparently to bring release to Judah. But why does the Lord, God of right, make use of such cruel and unscrupulous agents?" God's answer is the keynote of the Book of Habakkuk.)

He Voices the Mind of Judah

O Lord, how long shall I cry,
And thou wilt not hear?
I cry out unto thee of violence,
And thou wilt not save.
Why dost thou show me iniquity,
And cause me to behold oppression?
For destruction and violence are before me,
And there are that raise up strife and contention.
There the law is benumbed,
And justice never goeth forth;
For the wicked beset the righteous.

Behold ye among the nations,
And look, and wonder marvelously:

For I work a work in your days
Which ye will not believe, though it be told you.
For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation,
Who shall march through the breadth of the land,
To possess the dwelling places that are not theirs.
They are terrible and dreadful:
Their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves.
Their horses also are swifter than leopards,
And are more fierce than the evening wolves,
They come all of them for violence;
The set of their faces is forwards,
And they gather captives as the sands.

Art not thou from everlasting,
O Lord my God, my Holy One?
We shall not die!
O Lord, thou hast ordained him for judgment,
And thou, O Rock, hast established him for correction.
Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil,
And canst not look on iniquity.
Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously,
And holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

God Answers the Prophet

Then the Lord answered me, and said:

"Write the vision,
And make it plain upon tablets,
That he may run that readeth it.
For the vision is yet for an appointed time,
But at the end it shall speak, and not lie:
Though it tarry, wait for it;
Because it will surely come, it will not delay.
Behold, his soul is puffed up;
It is not upright in him:
But the just shall live by his faith."

JEHOIACHIN

Within a few weeks after this boy king began to reign, Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, and carried off its wealth and its nobles and ten thousand of its citizens. Jehoiachin was also taken with his mother and imprisoned in Babylon, and as we shall see later, after long captivity, was released in the later days of the Exile.

Nebuchadnezzar Plunders Jerusalem

And the king of Egypt came no more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken all from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates that belonged to the king of Egypt.

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done.

At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.

And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants were besieging it; and Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers. And the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his [Nebuchadnezzar's] reign.

And he carried out thence all the treasures of the houses of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said.

And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, and all the craftsmen and the smiths; none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.

And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon; and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from

JUDAH GOING INTO CAPTIVITY

From a drawing by Julius Schnorr von Carolfeld

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?
Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me,
Wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."

Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

Jeremiah's Lament over Jehoiachin

I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bore thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return.

> Is this man Coniah [Jehoiachin] a despised, broken idol?
> Is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure?
> Wherefore are they cast out, he and his family,
> And are cast into the land which they know not?
> O earth, earth, earth,
> Hear the word of the Lord.
> Thus saith the Lord:
> "Write ye this man childless,
> A man that shall not prosper in his days;
> For no man of his family shall prosper,
> Sitting upon the throne of David,
> And ruling any more in Judah."

Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles

(Convinced that there was no possibility of their return, Jeremiah wrote the exiles to settle contentedly in their new homes and pay no attention to those who would stir them with false hopes, but to hope that their children might come back to their native country.)

Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the elders of the exiles, by the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Babylon, saying: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon: 'Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; take ye wives, and have sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may have sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray to the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.'

"For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Let not your prophets and your diviners, that are in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely to you in my name: I have not sent them,' saith the Lord.

"For thus saith the Lord: 'After seventy years are accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

"'For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,' saith the Lord, 'thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray to me, and I will hearken to you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you,' saith the Lord: 'and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you,' saith the Lord; 'and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.'"

ZEDEKIAH

We come now to the last sad chapter of Judah's independent life. Zedekiah, King Josiah's youngest son and King Jehoiachin's uncle, was put on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar. He was a weak, indecisive character. One party, led by certain false priests, urged him to join with Tyre and Ammon and rebel against the oppression of Babylonia. He did so as soon as it seemed that Egypt would help. Jeremiah stoutly opposed such a revolt, seeing that it was hopeless. For his unwelcome counsel he was regarded as a traitor, and put in prison. When he was released and the king asked his advice, he continued to counsel that submission was the only way to save the city. As we shall read below, Babylonia promptly crushed the rebellion and captured the city after a terrible siege. The king was taken captive with his people to Babylon. Jeremiah was left behind, to become the comfort of those who remained.

Jeremiah Advises Submission to Babylon

Now the king of Babylon [Nebuchadnezzar] made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's father's brother, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim came this word to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: "Make thee bonds and yokes and put them on thy neck. And it shall come to pass that the kingdom that will not serve Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, will I punish."

I [Jeremiah] spoke also to Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, "Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence?"

Then Hananiah the son of Azzur, the prophet of Gibeon, said to me [Jeremiah] in the temple in the presence of the priests and all the people, saying: "Thus saith the Lord: 'I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon! Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the Lord's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon: and I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon,' saith the Lord: 'for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.'"

Then the prophet Jeremiah said to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the Lord, even the prophet Jeremiah said: "Amen, the Lord do so! The Lord perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the Lord's house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place."

JEREMIAH REBUKES AN UNWISE PROPHET

Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and broke it. And Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people, saying, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years.'" And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet after Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying: "Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord: 'Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron.' For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him; and I have given him the beasts of the field also.'"

Then said the prophet Jeremiah to Hananiah the prophet: "Hear now, Hananiah: The Lord hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore thus saith the Lord: 'Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord.'" So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. So in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, together with all his host, against Jerusalem, and besieged it, and they built forts against it round about. So the city was besieged to the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

JEREMIAH AGAIN ADVISES THE KING TO SURRENDER

The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, when king Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur the son of Malchijah, and

Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, saying: "Inquire, I pray thee, of the Lord for us; for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the Lord will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us."

Then said Jeremiah to them: "Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah, 'Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them into the midst of this city. And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live.'"

Zedekiah Imprisons the Prophet

Therefore the princes said to the king: "We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words to them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt."

Then Zedekiah the king said, "Behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do anything against you." Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchijah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sank in the mire.

Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the attendants who was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon (the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin), Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spoke to the king, saying: "My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is likely to die from hunger in the place where he is: for there is no more bread in the city."

JEREMIAH IS RELEASED

Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, "Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die."

So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence rags and worn-out garments, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, "Put now these rags and worn-out garments under thine armholes under the cords." And Jeremiah did so.

So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

THE PANIC-STRICKEN KING SEEKS THE PROPHET

Then Zedekiah the king sent and took Jeremiah the prophet to him into the third entry that is in the house of the Lord: and the king said to Jeremiah, "I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me."

Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I declare it to thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken to me?"

So Zedekiah the king swore secretly to Jeremiah, saying, "As the Lord liveth, that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy life."

Then said Jeremiah to Zedekiah: "Thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: 'If thou wilt assuredly go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thy house: but if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand.'"

And Zedekiah the king said to Jeremiah, "I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me."

But Jeremiah said, "They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord, which I speak to thee: so it shall be well to thee, and thy soul shall live."

So Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was there when Jerusalem was taken.

Jeremiah Shows Faith in the Future of His Country

And Jeremiah said: The word of the Lord came to me, saying: "Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come to thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy it.'"

So Hanamel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the Lord, and said to me, "Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself." Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord.

And I bought the field of Hanamel my uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver. And I subscribed the deed, and sealed it, and called witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances.

So I took the deed of purchase, the sealed one, with the terms and conditions, and the open one: and I delivered the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, in the presence of Hanamel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, before all the Jews that were sitting in the court of the prison.

And I charged Baruch before them, saying: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Take these deeds, this deed of purchase, both the sealed and the open one; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may be preserved for days to come.' For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, 'They shall yet purchase houses and fields and vineyards in this land.

"'Again there shall be heard in this place,
Which ye say shall be desolate, without man or beast,
In the cities of Judah, in the streets of Jerusalem
That are desolate, without man, without beast,
The sound of joy and the sound of gladness,
The voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride,
The voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord:
For the Lord is good;
For his mercy endureth forever.'"

Jerusalem Is Destroyed and Zedekiah Captured

On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.

Then a breach was made in the city. And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate. And it came to pass that when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, then they fled, and went out of the city by night, by way of the king's garden, by the gate between the two walls: and he went out the way of the plain.

But the Chaldeans' army pursued them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he pronounced judgment on him.

Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

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GENERAL ALLENBY ENTERING JERUSALEM

Contrast the capture of Jerusalem in the World War with the ruthless destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar. When General Allenby captured Jerusalem on December 11, 1917, after a fierce campaign, he did so without the destruction of a single building or foot of wall. "He chose the hardest road to victory to save it from the marks of war." It was the twenty-third time in history that the city had been captured. In deference to the religious sentiments of the inhabitants, his entry was on foot. "Accompanied by a guard that altogether numbered one hundred and fifty, he stood on Mount Zion on the steps of the Citadel at the entrance to David's Tower. There were no shouts of victory, no trumpets, no evidence of the spirit of triumph over a foe." A proclamation was read in seven languages that all men might "pursue their lawful business without fear," and the promise made that "every Holy Place, revered and held sacred by any faith, will be defended and protected."

THE PEOPLE ARE EXILED

In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, to Jerusalem; and he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire.

And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, broke down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away captive. But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.

So the people of Judah were carried away captive out of their land.

A KING OF JUDAH GAINS HIS FREEDOM

Zedekiah seems to have languished in prison, in blindness, until his death. But there was still living in Babylon another Jewish king, his nephew, Jehoiachin. We are told that, after nearly forty years of imprisonment, he was restored to kingly rank, though not to his kingdom.

And it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the twenty-seventh day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison. And he spoke kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon. And he changed his prison garments, and did eat bread before him continually all the days of his life. And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king of Babylon, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

JEREMIAH IS SET FREE

Now Nebuchadnezzar[46] king of Babylon had given command concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, "Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do to him even as he shall direct you."

So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and said to him: "The Lord thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place. Now the Lord hath brought it, and done according as he hath said: 'Because ye have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you.' And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which were upon thy hand. If it seem good to thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and I will look well to thee: but if it seem ill to thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land is before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go."

Now while Jeremiah was not yet gone back, he said, "Go back also to Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth convenient to thee to go." So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go.

Then went Jeremiah to Gedaliah; and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

Jeremiah's Sorrow over Jerusalem

The precious sons of Zion,
    Comparable to fine gold,
How are they esteemed as earthen pitchers,
    The work of the hands of the potter!
The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth
    To the roof of his mouth for thirst:
The young children ask bread,
    And no man breaketh it to them.

They that fed delicately
 Are desolate in the streets:
They that were brought up in scarlet
 Embrace dunghills.

Her nobles were purer than snow,
 They were whiter than milk;
They were more ruddy in body than rubies,
 Their polishing was as of sapphire.
Their visage is blacker than a coal;
 They are not known in the streets;
Their skin cleaveth to their bones;
 It is withered, it is become like a stick.

They that are slain with the sword
 Are better than they that are slain with hunger:
For these pine away, stricken through
 For want of the fruits of the field.

"Depart ye!" they cried to them, "Unclean!
 Depart, depart: touch not!"
When they fled away and wandered, men said among the heathen,
 "They shall no more sojourn here."

Jeremiah Gives the Fugitives Good Advice

Then all the captains of the forces, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least even to the greatest, came near, and said to Jeremiah the prophet: "Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and pray for us to the Lord thy God, even for all this remnant; (for we are left but a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us:) that the Lord thy God may show us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do."

Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest, and said to them: "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, to whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him:

"'If ye will still abide in this land,
Then will I build you, and not pull you down;
And I will plant you, and not pluck you up:
Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, whom ye fear;
For I am with you to save you,
And to deliver you from his hand.

"'And I will show mercies to you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land.

"'But if ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the Lord your God, saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt,[47] where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell: now therefore hear the word of the Lord, ye remnant of Judah: Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: If ye wholly set your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there: then it shall come to pass, that the sword, which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt; and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die.'"

NEVERTHELESS THE REFUGEES GO TO EGYPT

But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah that were returned from all nations whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah, the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah. So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the Lord: thus came they even to Tahpanhes.

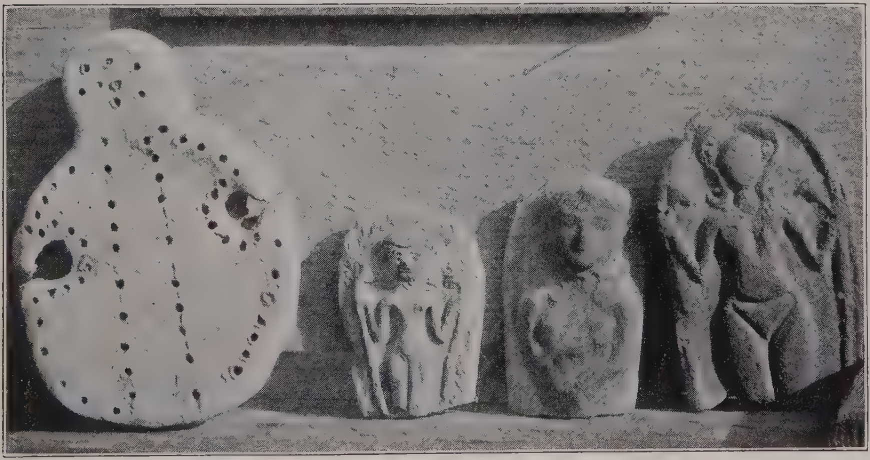
Jeremiah Rebukes the Faithless Jews

Jeremiah, forced by his countrymen to accompany them into Egypt, became, as it were, their pastor. Finding their wives offering sacrifice to the Egyptian gods, he rebuked them, as follows:

The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews who dwelt in the land of Egypt, who dwelt at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Memphis, and in the country of Pathros, saying:

"Wherefore commit ye this great evil against your own souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, out of the midst of Judah, to leave you none remaining; in that ye provoke me to wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye are gone to dwell?"

Then all the men who knew that their wives had burned incense to other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of



FOUR IMAGES OF "THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN"

Collection, Palestine Exploration Fund

These images, of Ashtoreth, "Queen of Heaven," were found during recent excavations in the Holy Land.

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A BRIDGE OVER JORDAN

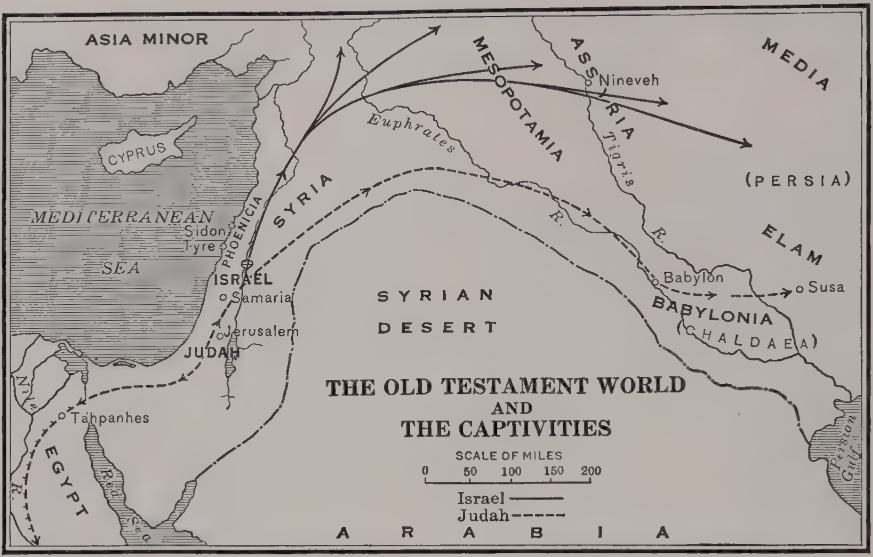
Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying: "As for the word that thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken to thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine."

Then Jeremiah said to all the people, and to all the women: "Hear ye the word of the Lord, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt: Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose word shall stand, mine, or theirs.'"

"Thy vengeance gave us to the stranger's hand,
And Abraham's children were led forth for slaves.
With fettered steps we left our pleasant land,
Envying our fathers in their peaceful graves:
The stranger's bread with bitter tears we steep,
And when our weary eyes should sink to sleep,
In the mute midnight we steal forth to weep,
Where the pale willows shade Euphrates' waves . . .

"The horn in sorrow shall bring forth in joy;
Thy mercy, Lord, shall lead thy children home;
He that went forth a tender, prattling boy,
Yet, ere he die, to Salem's streets shall come;
And Canaan's vines for us their fruit shall bear,
And Hermon's bees their honeyed stores prepare,
And we shall kneel again in thankful prayer,
Where o'er the cherub-seated God full blazed the irradiate dome . . ."

—*Henry Hart Milman*



THE OLD TESTAMENT WORLD AND THE CAPTIVITIES

THE OLD TESTAMENT WORLD

While the Hebrews knew something about more distant lands, their actual experiences during Old Testament times were confined to the area indicated in this map. The rectangle measures roughly six hundred and fifty miles from north to south, the length of California; and about a thousand miles from east to west, the distance from San Francisco to the eastern border of New Mexico. The states of California, Oregon, Washington, Montana and Utah would just about fill this space. Of this area only a hundred thousand square miles is fertile enough to tempt a farmer—a piece the size of the state of Wyoming. The rest is steppe-land, and is unmitigated desert.

The fertile area contained two river valleys that were the homes of the first great empires of antiquity, the Egyptian and the Babylonian. Syria and Palestine constitute a less fertile bridge, across which the armies and the merchants of these empires drove back and forth. While these empires were strong, therefore, the Hebrews had to be weak. The decay of Egypt at the end of the nineteenth dynasty (about 1200 B.C.) gave the Hebrews the opportunity they needed to conquer Palestine and take root, but, after five centuries, the rise of Assyria and the re-birth of Babylon destroyed their national life.

The northern kingdom of Israel, lying exactly in the path of empire, was the first to weaken under the impact of wealth and the loose morality of the religions of the East. She fell in 722 B.C. Her people were carried away by Sargon, the Assyrian, and were scattered among the nations of

Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and Media. They were absorbed, and their identity was lost. They dissolved like salt in water.

The southern kingdom of Judah, lying high on its limestone hills, resisted these soul-destroying ideas for a century and a half longer, and found safety politically in becoming a tribute-paying nation. But foolish kings at last brought down the vengeance of Babylon, and Judah was crushed. Nebuchadnezzar carried all but the dregs of the population to Babylonia; but, unlike Sargon in his dealings with Israel, he allowed the Judeans to preserve their unity in their land of exile. In succeeding years some of the exiles returned to rebuild Jerusalem and to establish themselves as a Jewish Church. From this band descended most of the Jews of today.

During the wars with Assyria and Babylonia, many hundred Jews voluntarily took up residence in Egypt; particularly at a place called Tahpanhes, in the Eastern Delta, and on the Island of Elephantine, near the first cataract of the Nile. These became an influential section of the Dispersion, as the scattered Jews were called. In the time of Christ, Alexandria became the largest center of Jewish population.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON
From a painting by Arthur Hacker

The Grief of the Exiles

Oh! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
Mourn—where their God hath dwelt, the godless dwell!

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice? . . .

—*Lord Byron*

ISRAEL, THE KINGDOM OF THE NORTH

JEROBOAM I

The Workingman Who Revolted and Divided the Kingdom of Israel

Jeroboam, the founder of the northern kingdom, was the great and good man of his own day. The son of an Ephraimite widow, Jeroboam was drafted to work on Solomon's fortifications in Jerusalem. Here, like Joseph in Egypt, he rose to leadership and royal favor and erelong was set over all the workmen of Ephraim and Manasseh. Among these forced levies discontent naturally arose, and the young superintendent dared to be labor's spokesman.

A prophet, Ahijah, fanned his courage and his ambition. Meeting him one day in a secluded spot, Ahijah took his own new coat, rent it into twelve parts, gave ten of them into the hands of the astonished Jeroboam and said, "Thus saith Jehovah the Lord of Israel, Behold I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and give ten tribes to thee."

Shortly after this incident Jeroboam led a strike of the men of Ephraim. The walk-out failed. The freedom-loving villagers were thrust back to their toil, and their champion fled to Egypt for protection, while Solomon grimly went on with his building.

The smoldering spirit of revolt broke out upon Solomon's death. The northern tribes summoned their former champion from Egypt, and when hope of obtaining satisfaction from Rehoboam was lost, they made Jeroboam king. He faced no easy task. Shechem, beautiful, well-watered, ancient and holy, natural trade center, was as a capital defenseless; and the new king must seek some other. To the attacks of Rehoboam and the intrigues of the disloyal was added early in his reign an invasion by Shishak, king of Egypt, who pillaged Israel as well as Judah. Abandoning the vale of Shechem, Jeroboam retreated east of the Jordan and fortified the heights of Penuel. Later he returned and built a new capital at Tirzah, overlooking the Jordan Valley.

For twenty-two years Jeroboam reigned, organizing the land's resources and defending her independence against Rehoboam's claim. Had we now the lost "chronicles of the kings of Israel," we should no doubt find him lauded as a hero and benefactor of his people.

Religion and nationality were then inseparable. Jerusalem as a place of worship for Israel was now impossible, for political reasons. If the people were to come up to Jehovah at all, it must be within their own border. To use the image of a bull as a symbol of Jehovah's power was but to follow an old Semitic conception. So the king set up royal shrines at Bethel and Dan, in which a bullock was the object of worship. He meant well undoubtedly. But his act proved to be a fatal error, for in so doing he "made Israel to sin." The prophets of a later age who wrote his Biblical biography have magnified this error until it quite obscures his virtues, which were neither few nor small.

Jeroboam Establishes a Rival Capital

AND it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come back, that they sent and called him to the assembly, and made him king over all Israel. There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and dwelt therein. And he went out from thence, and built Penuel.

And Jeroboam said in his heart: "If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then will the heart of this people return to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me, and return to Rehoboam king of Judah."

Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and he said to them: "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And he set the one in Beth-el; and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin.

And Jeroboam ordained a feast, like the feast that is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; so did he in Beth-el.

After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places. And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam.

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JEROBOAM ERECTS AN ALTAR AT BETHEL

From a sculpture by Mastroianni

The two "calves" erected at Bethel and at Dan were undoubtedly bullocks, an ancient Semitic symbol of the strength and vigor of their divinities. Jeroboam no doubt maintained that the worship of these calves was Jehovah-worship

Jeroboam Is Paid the Wages of Sin

At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick.

And Jeroboam said to his wife: "Rise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam: and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, who told me that I should be king over this people. And take with thee ten loaves, and cakes, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he will tell thee what shall become of the child."

And Jeroboam's wife did so, and rose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see; for his eyes were blind by reason of his age.

And the Lord said to Ahijah: "Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask of thee concerning her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say to her; for it will be, when she cometh in, that she will feign herself to be another woman."

And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings. Go, tell Jeroboam, 'Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes, but hast done evil above all that were before thee, and hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back; therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, till it be all gone.

" 'For the Lord will smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and he will root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the river [Euphrates], because they have made their sacred

JEROBOAM'S WIFE AND THE BLIND PROPHET

From a painting by G. Grenville Manton

His own blindness and the woman's disguise could not hide from the prophet the identity of his royal visitor. Nor could the present she brought turn aside the stern judgment of Jehovah. The face of the queen and her gesture indicate how deeply her heart has been wounded. She knows that her son will not live; she feels even now the weight of doom pronounced upon her house by the old Ahijah.

posts, provoking the Lord to anger. And he will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who sinned, and who made Israel to sin.'"

And Jeroboam's wife rose, and departed, and came to Tirzah; and when she came to the threshold of the house, the child died. And they buried him, and all Israel mourned for him.

And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. And he slept with his fathers.

NADAB

Jeroboam's dynasty soon came to an end, as the prophet had anticipated. Nadab was the only heir of Jeroboam to reach the throne. Baasha, a man "exalted from the dust," as the history describes him, rose up against him while he was fighting the Philistines and killed him.

Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah; and he reigned over Israel two years.

And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon. Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead.

BAASHA

Baasha was a common soldier who rose to the kingship. He proved to be a vigorous military leader. Merely to hold the throne of Israel for twenty-four years was evidence of that. His fortifying of Ramah, just north of Jerusalem, indicates his purpose to besiege and capture Jerusalem. Ringed around by hostile nations, he succeeded in spite of their efforts in giving his land a period of peaceful isolation.

In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, and he reigned twenty-four years. And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

And it came to pass, when he reigned, that Baasha smote all the house of Jeroboam: he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite; for the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel to sin.

Baasha did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

Then the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying: "Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel: and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin; behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat."

(The account of Baasha's defeat by King Asa of Judah, in alliance with the king of Syria, is given in the life of Asa. One result of this was that Baasha gave up building Ramah, and made his capital at Tirzah.)

And Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried at Tirzah.

ELAH

This self-indulgent king, a weak son of a strong father, was at home when his army was at the front. One of his commanders took this opportunity to murder him. Thus ended the dynasty of Baasha.

In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, and he reigned two years.

And his servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him. While he was in Tirzah, drinking himself

THE SITE OF TIRZAH

One of the capital cities of the northern kingdom. The little hill against the sky may well hide many a relic of the days of Jeroboam. In its fairness, overlooking the Jordan Valley, this site reminded the lover in the Song of Solomon of his beautiful bride.

drunk in the house of Arza, the steward of his house in Tirzah, Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead.

And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha; he left him not a single male, neither of his kinsfolks nor of his friends. Thus Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha.

ZIMRI

Three military adventurers now sought the throne. One of them, Zimri, seized Tirzah, the capital; and another, Omri, attacked him; while a third, Tibni, afterwards fought with Omri for the kingdom. Zimri, setting fire to the palace, was burned to death there. All this happened in a single week. Zimri's treachery must have been particularly mean, because even the wicked Jezebel later taunted Jehu by calling him "thou Zimri, thy master's murderer."

In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah.

Now the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. And the people that were encamped heard the report, "Zimri hath conspired and hath also slain the king"; wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp.

So Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire. Thus he died.

OMRI

Founder of a Strong Dynasty

Omri was elected king by his soldiers, the first instance in Hebrew history of such a method. Because his election was irregular, he had to fight for his throne; but he won. Omri was a great soldier. He conquered Moab and exacted a yearly tribute. In the days of his son Ahab this tribute consisted of the wool of one hundred thousand lambs and one hundred thousand rams. Word of his greatness reached even Assyria. Indeed, the Assyrians thought that Omri was the founder of the kingdom of Israel, for they had never heard of it until his day.

The single fact mentioned about Omri in the Bible is his transfer of the capital from Tirzah to Samaria. With the eye of a soldier he saw that the hill of Shemer, the "watchtower," was wonderfully adapted for a fortress and a royal city. It rose some three hundred feet from the plain and stood so far from its ring of mountains that an enemy could not reach it with any weapons of assault. Its situation was beautiful; and when Omri had surrounded it with walls and towers, it merited the description Isaiah later gave it:

> "The proud coronet of the drunkards of Ephraim,
> And the flower of her beauteous adornment,
> Which crowns the fat valley."

Omri's judgment is approved by the fact that Samaria was taken by the skilled Assyrian armies only after a siege of three years.

In one direction only did Omri meet with reverses. Benhadad, ruler of the Aramean kingdom of Damascus, took from him certain of his cities, probably east of the Jordan, and compelled him to grant trading rights in the city of Samaria to the Damascenes.

It is likely that Omri discovered a need of some sort of alliance to withstand pressure from the north, for we read that his son Ahab was married to Jezebel, daughter of the king of Tyre. This marriage undoubtedly indicates that a political treaty or alliance had been made. That there was need for an alliance of some kind is proved by the fact that in the year Omri died, 876 B.C., he was obliged to pay tribute to Assyria in order to avert an invasion. This is the first appearance of that power which was destined to throw an ever-deepening shadow over Israel for a hundred and fifty years, and at last to blot out her existence.

Though so little is said of him, Omri is to be remembered as the king who turned from military to commercial success. His alliance with Phœnicia was undoubtedly dictated partly by a commercial policy. Israel had the agricultural resources which Tyre needed, and Tyre had the shipping which Israel lacked. The combination must have worked out favorably for both parties. Wealth increased in Israel. Trade brought luxuries for the fortunate ones who could engage in it, and though the common people may not have prospered, at least the king and his friends felt that all was right with the world. When Omri's son Ahab came to the throne, he had not only one residence at Samaria, but one also at Jezreel. The former is called the "ivory palace." While, therefore, the financial genius for which the Jew is famous was yet in the germ, we here discover one of its early manifestations.

Omri Builds Samaria

Then the people of Israel were divided. Half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri.[48] But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath. So Tibni died, and Omri reigned. In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, and he reigned twelve years. Six years reigned he in Tirzah.

Then he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill, and named the city which he built after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill, Samaria.

(Recent excavations confirm this record, by showing that the site of Samaria was not built on prior to Omri's day.)

But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all that were before him.

So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria.

AHAB

A Wicked Queen Influences a Capable King

Ahab inherited his father Omri's ability and had some of his own besides. On the whole he was the ablest monarch that Israel produced, far-seeing, energetic, politic, and for the most part just. The great religious crisis which occurred in his reign should not blind us to Ahab's essential greatness.

The order of events in his reign is not at all clear. It seems probable, however, that the religious crisis preceded the wars with Damascus, and that during practically all of his reign Ahab paid tribute to Benhadad.

NABLUS

This city is the modern descendant of ancient Shechem, Abraham's first resting place in Canaan and an early meeting place of the tribes of Israel. The old town lies half a mile off the picture to the left. Wedged in between Ebal and Gerizim, the town was poorly situated for defense, and therefore Omri, with the eye of a soldier, chose a different and more strategically valuable site—Samaria. Nablus is famous today as the home of the remnant of the Samaritans, whose synagogue is near the center of this picture. It is still the administrative center of the district of Samaria. Its inhabitants retain something of the belligerent temper of the men of Shechem.

This did not prevent his laying the foundation of a commercial empire based on friendship rather than war. He continued his father's friendly relations with Phœnicia, adopted a conciliatory policy with Judah, and undertook commercial ventures by which the wealth of Israel was materially increased. He himself built an "ivory palace" at Samaria.

War was finally forced upon Ahab by Benhadad, king of Damascus. At first Ahab was worsted, but later he defeated his enemy, and much to the dismay of the prophetic party made peace and friendship with his conquered foe. The reason for this strange action was fear of Assyria. The defensive league which he and Benhadad formed stopped the Assyrian conqueror Shalmaneser at Karkar in the year 854 B.C. Shalmaneser, to be sure, claims a victory, but it took him twelve years to recover his courage for a second attack. With the threat of this great invasion removed, Ahab felt that he could insist on Benhadad's restoring to him the Israelitish cities of Gilead east of Jordan. Benhadad saw the matter differently and declared war. Though assisted in this campaign by Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, the attempt ended in failure, for Ahab was wounded by a stray arrow, and after fighting all day in his chariot, he died without winning the victory.

Though Ahab was one of the greatest of the kings of Israel, his memory has been blasted by the prophetic writers on account of his wife Jezebel. This young woman had a bringing-up quite at variance with the ideals in vogue in Israel. Her father was an autocrat who had gained his throne by assassination, and a priest as well of the Phœnician deity Baal Melkart. Jezebel was a chip off the old block. She made it her chief business to introduce and foster the worship of this Phœnician Baal, and she strengthened in her husband's mind some autocratic notions of the kingship that were foreign to the ideals of Israel. When her father wanted anything, he took it. She saw no reason, therefore, why her husband should not seize Naboth's vineyard; or, if Naboth resisted, why he should not put the rebellious subject out of the way.

Such high-handed actions were not to be tolerated in Israel, and therefore the incident of Naboth's vineyard was followed by Elijah's denunciation, which brought in its train at last the complete annihilation of the dynasty of Ahab. Jezebel and the seventy descendants of the royal family all met their end at the hands of Jehu.

While, therefore, Ahab must be reckoned a great man, he must also be charged with not having understood completely the democratic and religious genius of his people.

BY HIS MARRIAGE AHAB ALLIES HIMSELF WITH SIDON

In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel; and he reigned over

Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. Now Ahab did evil in the sight of the Lord more than all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshiped him. And he reared up an altar to Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a sacred post; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

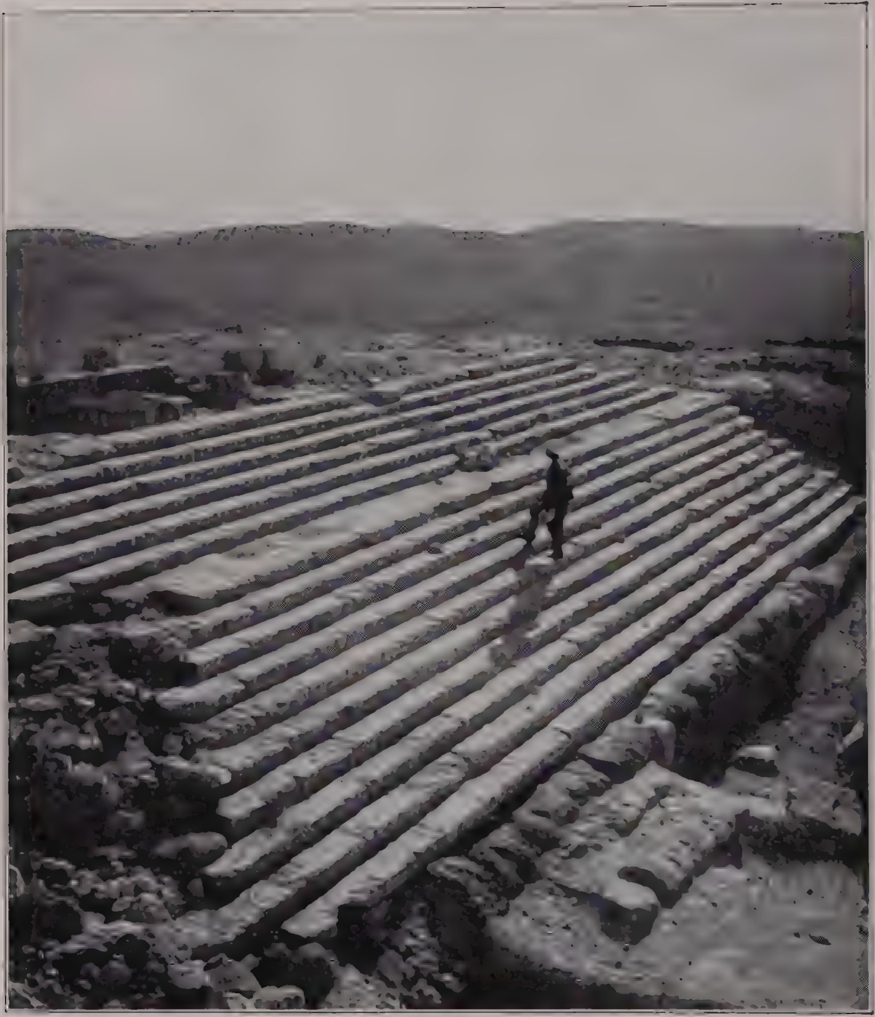
There was none like Ahab, who sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.

Ben-hadad Makes Unreasonable Demands

Now Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together; and there were thirty-two kings with him, and horses, and chariots. And he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it. And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said to him, "Thus saith Ben-hadad, 'Thy silver and thy gold are mine: and thy wives and thy children, the goodliest, are mine.'"

And the king of Israel answered and said, "My lord, O king, according to thy saying, 'I am thine, and all that I have.'"

And the messengers came again, and said: "Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying: 'Although I have sent to thee saying, Thou shalt give to me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children; yet I will send my servants to thee to-morrow about this time, and they shall search thy house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away.'"



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STONE STAIRWAY TO HEROD'S TEMPLE, SAMARIA

This is practically all that is left of a great temple, built by his friend Herod to the divine Augustus who gave him the site of the city. Just below the temple, Herod's street of columns ran quite around the crest of the hill. From this elevation of over three hundred feet above the plain, one can catch a glimpse of the blue Mediterranean twenty miles away. The excavators have found beneath and behind this temple the palaces of the Hebrew kings, —the "ivory palace" of Ahab, the ruder structure built by Omri, and above both of these the buildings of the Byzantine period. On the eastern end of the hill is the wretched village of Sebastiyeh, the only descendant of the once prosperous capital city.

Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, "Mark, I pray you, and see how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent to me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my gold; and I denied him not."

And all the elders, and all the people, said to him, "Hearken not to him, nor consent."

Then Ben-hadad sent to him, and said, "The gods do so to me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me."

And the king of Israel answered and said, "Tell him, 'Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.'"

Israel Prevails over a Powerful Enemy

And it came to pass, when Ben-hadad heard this message, as he was drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions, that he said to his servants, "Set yourselves in array!" And they set themselves in array against the city.

And, behold, there came a prophet to Ahab king of Israel, saying, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thy hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.'"

And Ahab said, "By whom?"

And he said, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Even by the young men of the princes of the provinces.'"

Then he said, "Who shall begin the battle?"

And he answered, "Thou."

Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty-two; and after them he numbered all the people, even all the children of Israel, being seven thousand.

And they went out at noon. But Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty-two kings that helped him. And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first. And they slew every one his man. And the Syrians fled; and Israel pursued them: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on a horse with the horsemen. Then the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.

And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said to him, "Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee."

And the servants of the king of Syria said to him: "Their gods are gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. And do this thing: Take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put captains in their places; and number thee an army, like the army that thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they." And he hearkened to their voice, and did so.

Now it came to pass at the return of the year, that Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight against Israel. And the children of Israel were numbered, and were all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.

And there came a man of God, and spoke to the king of Israel, and said: "Thus saith the Lord: 'Because the Syrians have said, The Lord is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thy hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.'"

And they pitched one over against the other seven days. And so it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians a hundred thousand footmen in one day. But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city. And Ben-hadad fled, and came into the city, into an inner chamber.

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ENGANNIM (JENIN)

At this point the hills of Samaria part. Sloping in a wide bay to the right, one arm of them becomes Mount Gilboa; bending straight to the left, the other arm rises undulatingly until it reaches a summit in Mount Carmel. Between the two arms the Plain of Esdraelon lies. You see here the mosque of Engannim, the hotel and the humbler houses in the midst of their luxuriant gardens. Through Engannim go all the main roads northward. That is why Benhadad passed this way on his retreat, and why Jesus later healed the lepers here on his way to Jerusalem.

A Tyrant Pleads for Mercy

And his servants said to him: "Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel: perhaps he will save thy life."

So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, "Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, 'I pray thee, let me live.'"

And he said, "Is he yet alive? he is my brother."

Now the men diligently observed, and hastened to catch whether it were his mind; and they said, "Thy brother Ben-hadad." Then he said, "Go ye, bring him."

Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot.

And Ben-hadad said to him, "The cities which my father took from thy father I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria."

Then said Ahab, "I will let thee go, with this covenant." So he made a covenant with him, and let him go.

Ahab Is Rebuked

And as the king passed by, a certain man of the sons of the prophets cried to the king, and said: "Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man to me, and said, 'Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver.' And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone."

And the king of Israel said to him, "So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it."

Then he hastened and took the headband away from his eyes; and the king of Israel discerned him, that he was of the prophets. And he said to him, "Thus saith the Lord: 'Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man whom I had appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.'"

And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.

It may be that Ahab's excuse for this extraordinary mercy toward his enemy was his knowledge of the rise and menace of the Assyrian empire. He may have thought that the friendship of these Syrians might be useful to him some time in keeping off this powerful enemy. So treacherous, however, was Ahab that, as we shall see a little later, he himself soon fell upon the Syrians, joining with the king of Judah to take advantage of their momentary weakness. In that war he lost his life.

The Prophets Approve an Aggressive Alliance

Now they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel. And it came to pass in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. And the king of Israel said to his servants, "Know ye that Ramoth-gilead is ours, and we are still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria?"

And he said to Jehoshaphat, "Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead?"

And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses." And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Inquire, I pray thee, for the word of the Lord today."

Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, "Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear?"

And they said, "Go up! for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king."

But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him?"

And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil."

And Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say so."

Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, "Hasten hither Micaiah the son of Imlah."

And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in a threshing-floor in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them.

And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron: and he said, "Thus saith the Lord, 'With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.'"

And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the king's hand."

And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good."

MICAIAH COURAGEOUSLY SPEAKS THE BITTER TRUTH

And Micaiah said, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith to me, that will I speak."

So he came to the king. And the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear?"

And he answered him, "Go, and prosper: and the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king."

And the king said to him, "How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord?"

And he said, "I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd; and the Lord said, 'These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace.'"

And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?"

Then Micaiah said: "Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, 'Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, 'I will persuade him.' And the Lord said to him, 'Wherewith?' And he said, 'I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And he said, 'Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.' Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee."

But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, "Which way went the spirit of the Lord from me to speak to thee?"

And Micaiah said, "Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself."

Then the king of Israel said: "Take Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say, 'Thus saith the king: Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace.'"

And Micaiah said, "If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me."

So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead.

A Chance Shot Kills Ahab

And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but put thou on thy robes." And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle.

But the king of Syria commanded his thirty-two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, "Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel."

And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, "Surely it is the king of Israel." And they turned aside to fight against him: and Jehoshaphat cried out. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him.

Then a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the armor: wherefore he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn thy hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded."

And the battle increased that day. And the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even; and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot.

And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, "Every man to his city, and every man to his own country."

So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood, according to the word of the Lord, which he had spoken.

Now the rest of the acts of Ahab,[49] and all that he did, and the ivory house which he built, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

AHAZIAH

The Evil Son of Evil Parents

Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. For he served Baal, and worshiped him, and provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and was sick. Then he sent messengers, and said to them, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether or not I shall recover of this sickness."

But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite: "Rise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria,

AHAB PIERCED BY AN ARROW

From a painting by James J. Tissot

The history of Ahab was written by his enemies. For that reason justice has not been done to this warrior-statesman, one of the strongest kings Israel ever produced. His death upon the field of battle was a tragedy for Israel.

and say to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from the bed on which thou art gone up, but thou shalt surely die.'" And Elijah departed.

When the messengers came back to Ahaziah, he said to them, "Why have ye returned?"

And they said to him: "There came a man up to meet us and said to us: 'Go back again to the king who sent you, and say to him, Thus saith the Lord: Is it because there is no God in Israel that thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Therefore thou shalt not come down from the bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.'"

And he said to them, "What kind of man was he who came up to meet you and told you these things?"

And they answered him, "He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins."[50]

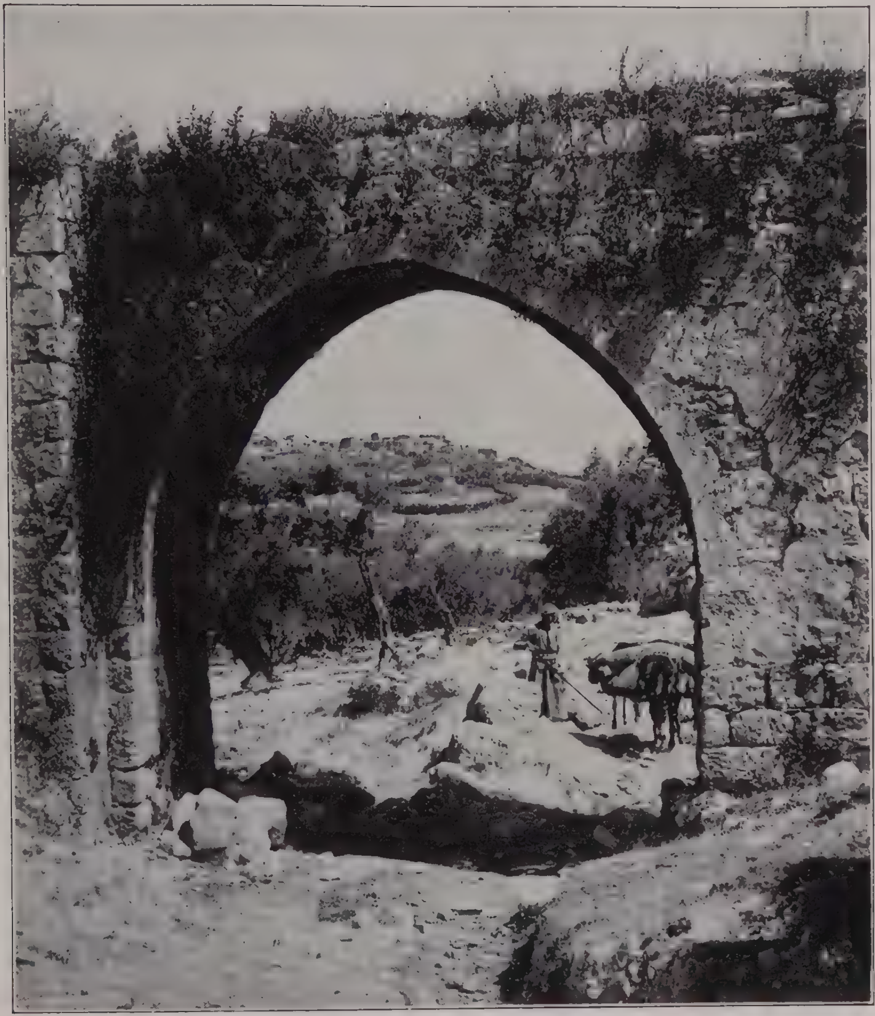
Then he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite!" Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of a hill. And he spoke to him, "Thou man of God, the king hath said, 'Come down.'"

And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, "If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty." And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

Again also he sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, "O man of God, thus hath the king said, 'Come down quickly.'"

And Elijah answered and said to them, "If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty." And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said to him: "O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight."



THE HILL OF SAMARIA

In the days when cities had to be captured at close range, Samaria was impregnable. It capitulated only to starvation. Now the long-range guns of a hostile fleet could lie at sea out of sight and reduce it to powder! The city that once crowned this isolated hill was quite ringed about with mountains; but at one point to the westward through a little niche in the hills the blue Mediterranean flashed its message of beauty. From her palace windows Queen Jezebel may have watched the galleys of her father sail forth to the ends of the earth and return laden with the wealth of Tarshish and of Ophir. Samaria must have seemed to her a poverty-stricken town, lacking that atmosphere of far-off places which was her birthright in Tyre. Yonder minaret shows that the town is Mohammedan, but the mosque itself is a splendid Gothic church of the Crusaders, who here venerated the tomb of John the Baptist.

And the angel of the Lord said to Elijah, "Go down with him: be not afraid of him." And he rose, and went down with him to the king.

And he said to him, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word?'

"Therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die."

So he died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken.

JEHORAM

Jehoram (or Joram, as it is sometimes written) was the second son of Ahab and Jezebel, Ahaziah's brother. He began his reign with some small religious reforms; but he was soon going along in the footsteps of his father, engaged in warfare against Moab and Syria. His campaigns seem to have been fruitless. During his whole reign the wise and kindly influence of Elisha, the successor of Elijah, was felt. Elisha was not a hermit prophet, but a lover of towns, a man beloved by all who knew him, as we shall learn in Volume Three.

Water Is Miraculously Provided

Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord; but not like his father, and like his mother. For he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless, he cleaved to the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster; and he rendered to the king of Israel the wool of a hundred thousand lambs, and of a hundred thousand rams.

And it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled[51] against the king of Israel.

And king Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time, and numbered all Israel. And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab hath rebelled against me. Wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle?"

And Jehoshaphat said, "I will go up; I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses."

Then he said, "Which way shall we go up?"

And he answered, "The way through the wilderness of Edom."

So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom; and they made a circuit of seven days' journey; and there was no water for the army, and for the cattle that followed them.

(This "king" of Edom was Jehoshaphat's own deputy. He could therefore be summoned to arms; and his people could be compelled to yield passage for the allied army through their scantily watered land. No wonder Edom revolted after Jehoshaphat's death.)

And the king of Israel said, "Alas! that the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!"

And Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may inquire of the Lord by him?"

Then one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, "Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, who used to minister to Elijah."

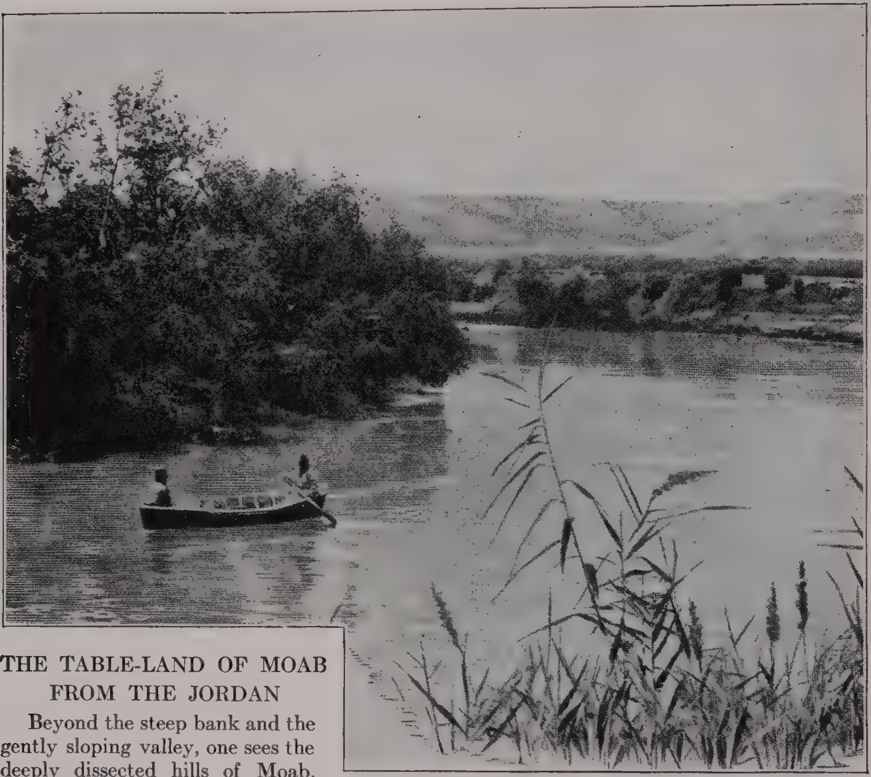
And Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the Lord is with him."

So the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, went down to him.

And Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother."

But the king of Israel said to him, "Nay; for the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hands of Moab."

And Elisha said: "As the Lord of hosts liveth, before



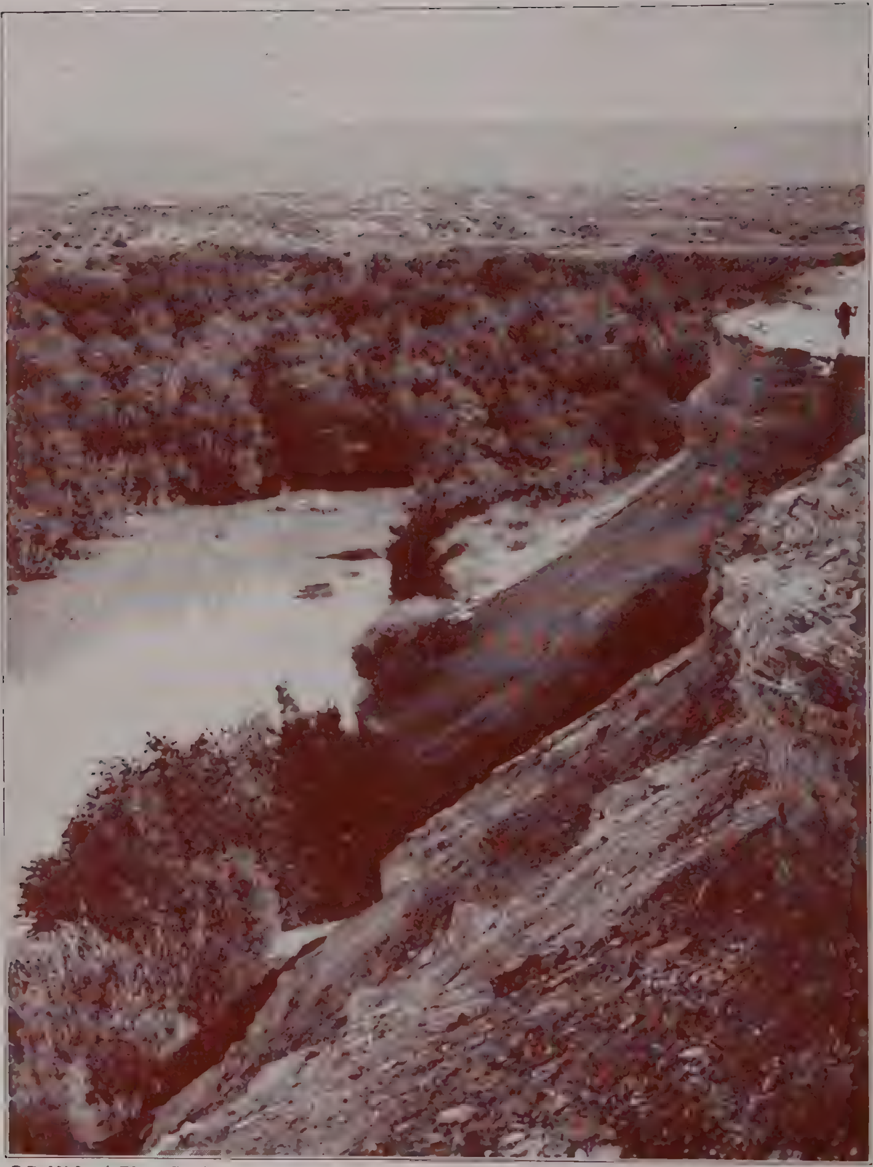
THE TABLE-LAND OF MOAB FROM THE JORDAN

Beyond the steep bank and the gently sloping valley, one sees the deeply dissected hills of Moab. Though filled with ravines, their summits are level, so that from almost any point in Western Palestine the sky line of Moab is as straight as a sword blade.

whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. But now bring me a minstrel."

And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.

And he said: "Thus saith the Lord, 'Make this valley full of ditches.' For thus saith the Lord: 'Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.' And this is but a light thing in the sight of the Lord: he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand. And ye shall smite every fenced city and every choice city, and shall fell



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LOOKING FROM MOAB TO JUDEA ACROSS THE JORDAN every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones."

And it came to pass in the morning, at the time of offering sacrifice, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.

An Odd Mistake Leads Moab to Defeat

Now when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered themselves together, all that were able to put on armor, and upward, and stood on the border.

And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water over against them as red as blood: and they said, "This is blood! The kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!"

When they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they went forward smiting the Moabites, even in their country.

And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees: only in Kir-hareseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it.

When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through even to the king of Edom, but they could not. Then he took his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall. And there was great wrath against Israel; and they departed from him, and returned to their own land.

The rest of Elisha's patriotic activities, during this reign and that which followed, are related in the life of Elisha, among the "Deeds of Daring and Devotion" in Volume Three.

Deliverance from Syria Is Promised

And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver.

And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman to him, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!"

And he said, "If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the threshing-floor, or out of the winepress?"

And the king said to her, "What aileth thee?"

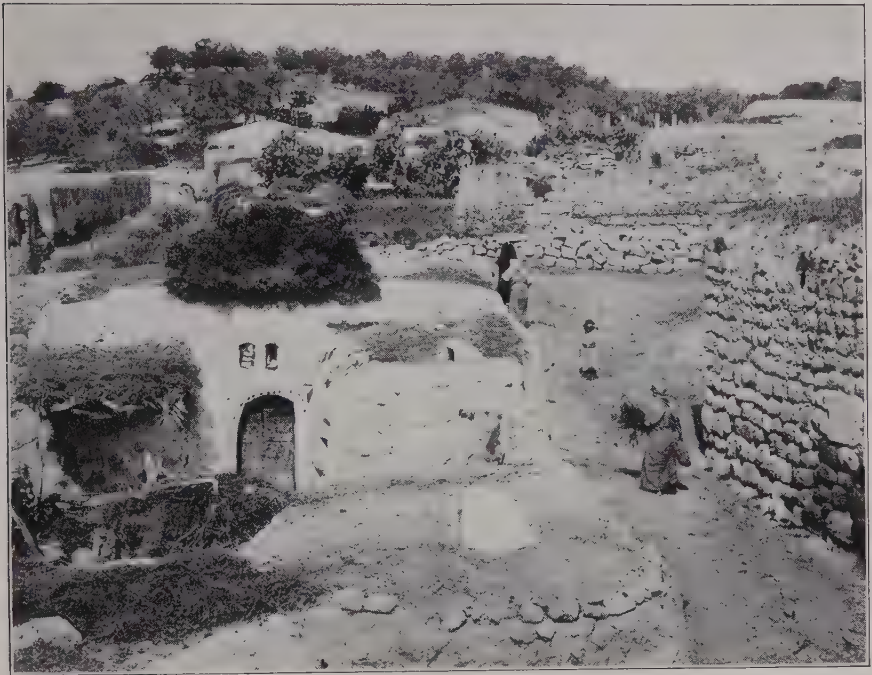
And she answered: "This woman said to me, 'Give thy son, that we may eat him today; and we will eat my son tomorrow.' So we did. And I said to her on the next day, 'Give thy son, that we may eat him'; and she hath hid her son."

And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes. And he passed by upon the wall; and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh. And he said, "God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day."

Now Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him. And the king sent a man from before him. But ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, "Do you see how this son of a murderer hath sent a man to take away my head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down to him.

And the king said, "Behold, this evil is of the Lord: why should I wait for the Lord any longer?"

Then Elisha said: "Hear ye the word of the Lord: Thus saith the Lord: 'Tomorrow, about this time, shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.'"



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THE SAMARIA OF TODAY

One of the most wretched villages in Palestine. Huts of stone, cemented with mud, roofed with mud and inhabited by all kinds of living things, human and sub-human. To such a depth has sunk the glory of Ahab and of Herod. Beyond the houses to the right you may see the tops of a dozen monolithic pillars, relics of what was once the law court of Herod the Great. The excavators have uncovered its entire area down to the mosaic floor and have found that perfect type of meeting place which the early Church appropriated for its place of worship, even preserving its heathen name, "basilica." A Christian basilica is, therefore, a meetinghouse built in the style of a Roman law court. The hill in the center of the picture marks the highest point of the old city. Beyond the trees rise the platform and the staircase of Herod's temple to Augustus.

Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, "Behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, could this thing be?"

And he said, "Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof."

An Army Is Routed by a Marvel

Now there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate. And they said one to another: "Why sit we here until we die? If we say, 'We will enter into the city,' the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we shall die. Now therefore come; and let us go over to the camp of the Syrians. If they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die."

So they rose up in the twilight, to go to the camp of the Syrians. And when they were come to the outskirts of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host. And they had said one to another, "Lo! the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us." Wherefore they rose, and fled in the twilight. And they left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.

And when these lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, they went into one tent, and ate and drank; and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it. And they came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. And they said one to another: "We do not well. This is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace. If we tarry till the morning light, punishment will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household."

So they came and called to the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, "We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but the horses tied, and the asses tied, and the tents as they were."

And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's household within.

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GATEWAY TO HEROD'S CITY OF SAMARIA

This round tower and the tower beyond the steep roadway guarded the western entrance to the city that Herod built at Samaria. The walls of this city ran quite around the hill so that the whole must have merited Isaiah's description of the older city, "proud coronet of the drunkards of Ephraim." Viewed from any of the surrounding hills, the town rose symmetrically out of the plain, like an island, from a billowy sea of golden wheat; its slopes well covered with the silvery green of olive trees, from among which issued the grey battlements and towers that lent an atmosphere of strength and finality to the whole. The prophet saw only that the city crowned "the fat valley of them that are overcome with wine." Out of the older gate built on this site issued the lepers on the day when they found the deserted camp of the Syrians in the plain below.

And the king rose in the night, and said to his servants: "I will now show you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we are hungry: therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, 'When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.'"

And one of his servants answered and said, "Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, and let us send and see."

They took therefore two chariots with horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, "Go and see."

And they went after them to Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste.

And the messengers returned, and told the king. And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord.

Then the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate; and the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spoke when the king came down to him.

Elisha Anoints the Succeeding King

Now king Jehoram went back to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

Then Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, and said to him: "Gird up thy loins, and take this vial of oil in thy hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead. And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu[52] the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him rise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber. Then take the vial of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, 'Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel.' Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not."

So the young man went to Ramoth-gilead. And when he came, behold, the captains of the host were sitting; and he said, "I have an errand to thee, O captain."

And Jehu said, "To which of all of us?"

And he said, "To thee, O captain."

And Jehu rose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said to him, "Thus said the Lord God of Israel, 'I have anointed thee king over the people of the Lord, even over Israel.'" And he opened the door and fled.

Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord; and they said to him, "Is all well? Wherefore came this mad fellow to thee?"

And he said to them, "Ye know the man, and his talk."

And they said, "It is false; tell us now."

Then he said, "Thus and thus spoke he to me, saying, 'Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel.'"

Then they hastened, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew the trumpet, saying, "Jehu is king!"

And Jehu said, "If it be your minds, then let none go forth nor escape out of the city to go to tell it in Jezreel."

Jehoram Comes to a Tragic End

So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Jehoram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Jehoram. And there stood a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, "I see a company."

And Jehoram said, "Take a horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, 'Is it peace?'"

So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, "Thus saith the king, 'Is it peace?'"

And Jehu said, "What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me."

And the watchman told, saying, "The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again."

Then he sent out a second on horseback, who came to them, and said, "Thus saith the king, 'Is it peace?'"

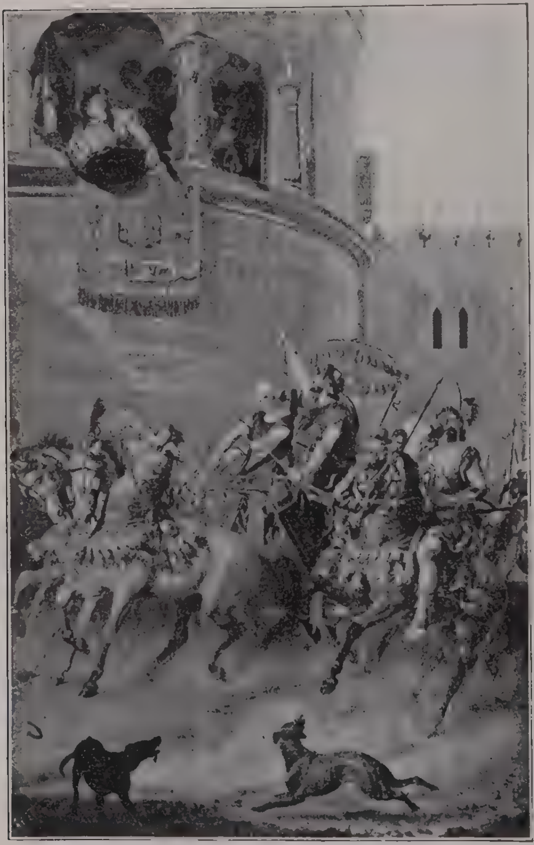
And Jehu answered, "What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me."

And the watchman told, saying, "He came even to them, and cometh not again; and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously."

Then Jehoram said, "Make ready."

And they made ready his chariot. And Jehoram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot; and they went out to meet Jehu, and they met him in the garden of Naboth the Jezreelite.

And it came to pass, when Jehoram



QUEEN JEZEBEL

From a painting by E. H. Corbould

This picture vividly portrays the proud insolence of Queen Jezebel and the tremendous vigor and masterful bearing of Jehu. In a moment this scene will change. The proud queen will be trampled under the feet of the snorting horses, and the dogs now yelping in the foreground will crown the tragedy.

saw Jehu, that he said, "Is it peace, Jehu?" And he answered, "What peace, so long as the idolatries of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?"

And Jehoram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, "There is treachery, O Ahaziah!"

Then Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot.

Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain: "Take him up, and cast him on the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, the Lord uttered this saying against him: 'Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons,' saith the Lord; 'and I will requite thee on this ground.' Now therefore take and cast him on the ground, according to the word of the Lord."

But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden-house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, "Smite him also in the chariot!" And they smote him at the ascent to Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there. And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulcher with his fathers in the city of David.

Now the destruction of Ahaziah was of God, in that he went unto Jehoram: for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the Lord had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

And Jehu sought Ahaziah, and they caught him, and they brought him to Jehu, and slew him; and they buried him, for they said, "He is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the Lord with all his heart."

JEZEBEL IS SLAIN

And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her eyes, and adorned her head, and looked out at the window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?"

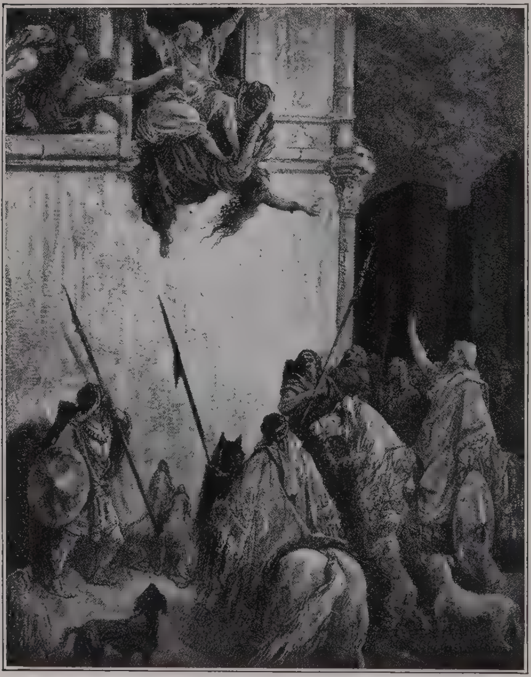
And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, "Who is on my side? who?" And there looked out to him two or three servants. And he said, "Throw her down."

So they threw her down. And some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and he trod her under foot. And when he was come in, he ate and drank.

Then he said, "Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her; for she is a king's daughter."

And they went to bury her; but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands.

Wherefore they came back, and told it to him. And he said: "This is the word of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying: 'In the field of Jezreel shall the dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel. And the body of Jezebel shall be as refuse upon the face of the ground in the field of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.'"



DEATH OF JEZEBEL
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

(In spite of her many crimes, we cannot but feel a certain pity for this old Phœnician who died like a queen. Even Jehu was moved to give her the burial of a king's daughter.)

JEHU

His Reign Distinguished for a Ruthless Policy of Reform

Jehu is one of the most dramatic figures in the Old Testament, a man of action and of intense religious zeal according to his lights.

He appears first as captain in a council of war held beneath the walls of Ramoth-gilead when the wounded King Joram had gone home to Jezreel to recuperate. A young prophet burst in, demanded a private interview with Jehu, anointed him king of Israel, and departed. The assembled captains took the hint and proclaimed Jehu king. Jehu at once shows his impetuous and clean-cut executive quality. Leaving orders that none should depart from Ramoth-gilead to tell the news, he took a chariot and small bodyguard of cavalry and started posthaste for Jezreel. The king, to whom his approach was reported, mounted his chariot and, together with King Ahaziah of Judah, who had come up on a visit to his convalescing uncle, rode out to learn what might have happened at the front.

It was a dramatic interview. The two kings, thus surprised, met Jehu in the field of Naboth, a fitting scene for the culmination of the revolt. In answer to Joram's question, Jehu sent an arrow through the king's heart. Ahaziah turned his chariot to flee, but at Jehu's command he was killed also.

Jehu now turned to the palace. The queen-mother Jezebel had heard the news and understood at once the fate that was awaiting her. She resolved to die like a queen. Putting on all her robes of state she appeared boldly at the window as Jehu drove into the palace yard. With the stinging taunt "You Zimri!" she placed him where he belonged among the assassins. Then at Jehu's command she was thrown headlong to the ground by the servants. Jehu drove his chariot over her and went in to dinner. When later he bethought himself of his duty to bury her as a queen, he found that the dogs had relieved him of that trouble.

But Jehu had hardly begun his task of killing in Israel. The seventy descendants of Ahab were beheaded at his order. Everybody in Jezreel who had any connection by blood or friendship or official position with the house of Ahab was sacrificed, and even Judean princes on their way to visit their royal cousins of Israel were surprised and murdered. All the Baal-worshipers were collected in their temple by his order and annihilated. Thus perished the entire house of Ahab, and the worship of Jezebel's god.

But this act of retribution brought Israel very low. The Assyrian conqueror Shalmaneser III forced Jehu to pay tribute, and Hazael of Damascus in the next thirty years stripped Israel of her cities and wealth in pitiless fashion. Jehu was to blame for his country's humiliation, and Jehovah-worship was not an iota advanced.

The New King Disposes of All Rivals

Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent them to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to the guardians of Ahab's children, saying: "Now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your lord's sons are with you, and there are with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armor; look ye out the best and fittest of the sons of your lord, and set him on the throne of his father, and fight for your master's house."

But they were exceedingly afraid. And they said, "Behold, two kings did not stand before him: how then shall we stand?"

Then he that was over the house, and he that was over the city, the elders also, and the guardians, sent to Jehu, saying, "We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us. We will not make any king: do what is good in thine eyes."

Then he wrote to them a second letter, saying, "If ye are for me, and if ye will hearken to my voice, take the heads of the men, your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel, by to-morrow this time."

Now the king's sons, seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, who brought them up. And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons; and put their heads in baskets, and sent them to him to Jezreel.

So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolk, and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

And Jehu rose and departed, and came to Samaria. As he was at the shearing-house on the way, Jehu met with the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, "Who are ye?"

And they answered, "We are the brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down to salute the children of the king and the children of the queen."

THE TOWER OF JEZREEL

This ruined tower preserves the memory of Ahab and Jezebel, who once built here a pleasant palace and wrested from its rightful owner a rich vineyard. Somewhere within the area of this squalid village occurred those meetings between Ahab and Naboth in which an autocratic king found his will opposed by a democratic Israelite. Here, after the legalized murder of Naboth, the dauntless man of God faced Ahab and cowed his haughty spirit by the revelation of future disasters. From this city Ahab went forth to his heroic death on the plains of Gilead; and to this city drove Jehu, in the flush of his new-found kingship, and here Queen Jezebel met death at his hands. Though the memories of Jezreel are tragic, the view from its tower is one of the most entrancing in all Palestine.

And he said, "Take them alive!"

So they took them alive, and slew them at the pit by the shearing-house, even two and forty men; neither left he any of them.

And when he was departed thence, he found Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him. And he saluted him, and said to him, "Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?"

And Jehonadab answered, "It is. If it be, give me thy hand."

And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord."

So they made him ride in his chariot. And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained to Ahab in Samaria.

Jehu Entraps the Priests of Baal

Then Jehu gathered all the people together, and said to them: "Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu shall serve him much. Now therefore call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting. For I have a great sacrifice to do to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live."

But Jehu did it in subtlety, to the intent that he might destroy the worshipers of Baal.

And Jehu said, "Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal." And they proclaimed it. And Jehu sent through all Israel; and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. And they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full from one end to the other.

And he said to him who was over the wardrobe, "Bring forth vestments for all the worshipers of Baal." And he brought them forth vestments.

Then Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal. And he said to the worshipers of Baal:

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SITE OF ANCIENT DAN

Some day this ancient site will be excavated and we shall find the layers of superimposed towns which represent its long history from Phœnician days to Roman. This city marked the northern limit of the Hebrew conquest, as Beersheba marked its southern.

"Search, and see that there are none here with you of the servants of the Lord, but the worshipers of Baal only."

And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings, Jehu appointed eighty men without, and said, "If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him."

And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, "Go in, and slay them! let none come forth."

And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal. And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burned them. And they broke down the image of Baal, and broke down the house of Baal. Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

JEHU FAILS TO REFORM HIMSELF

Howbeit, from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, namely, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan.

And the Lord said to Jehu: "Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel."

But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin.

In those days the Lord began to cut off from Israel: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; from Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.

And Jehu slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria.

JEHOAHAZ

A Sinful King and a Nation's Losses

In the twenty-third year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all their days. And Jehoahaz besought the Lord, and the Lord hearkened to him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. (And the Lord gave Israel a savior,[53] so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians; and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime. Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, but walked therein: and there remained the sacred post also in Samaria.) Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria destroyed them, and made them like the dust by threshing.

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

JEHOASH

Brief as is the account of the life of this king, it is plain that Jehoash (sometimes written Joash) was one of the strongest rulers of the northern kingdom. He recaptured ten cities that the Syrians had taken, and humiliated the southern kingdom by destroying its fortification and levying a tribute.

Now Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. But the Lord was gracious to them, and had compassion on them, and had respect to them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.

And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities which Ben-hadad had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Jehoash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

(In the account of Amaziah, king of Judah, we read how that king hired an army of mercenaries of Jehoash, who, though they had been paid in full, ravaged the country of Judah on their return. Perhaps it was on this account that Amaziah sent Jehoash the following challenge to fight:)

Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us measure strength with one another."

And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying: "The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, 'Give thy daughter to my son to wife': and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trod down the thistle. Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thy heart hath lifted thee up: glory of this, and tarry at home: for why shouldst thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldst fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?"

But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah measured strength with one another at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah. And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled every man to his tent.

And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, four hundred cubits. And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

(In the account of Elisha, among the "Deeds of Daring and Devotion" in Volume Three, we read how King Jehoash visited Elisha upon the latter's deathbed, and how the prophet gave him a farewell message.)

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

JEROBOAM II

How Prosperity Weakened the Northern Kingdom

It is singular that Jeroboam's reign, the longest and most brilliant in Israel, should receive hardly any mention in Biblical narrative. We know only that Jeroboam II, the son of Jehoash, extended his political sway over practically all of David's kingdom from Hamath on the north to the Dead Sea on the south; and if we count Judah as a vassal, the limit of his power southward was Egypt. Naturally the one condition that made this burst of power possible was the inactivity of Assyria. By a strange coincidence both Israel and Judah were ruled by brilliant and able kings, whose long reigns were contemporaneous. For a whole generation, therefore, the Hebrews enjoyed what has been called an Indian summer of prosperity.

Palestine was free from invasion. Peace brought plenty; and as the years passed, a feeling of security settled down over the land. The Hebrews could not see, as we see, that this brief burst of sunshine was soon to be clouded in by the winter of a devastating invasion from the north.

But though the historians are silent regarding this reign, a flood of evidence pours in from the writing of the prophets Amos and Hosea. Through them we learn that a great social transformation had been going on. Peace had enabled the nobles and richer classes to develop their country's resources; commerce had brought all kinds of luxuries in from the four corners of the world, and the population had ceased to be entirely a nation of shepherds and farmers. Cities took the place of villages. The nobles and richer classes transferred their homes to the capital, and the peasantry, who had suffered in war but had not prospered by commerce, were gradually reduced to serfdom, their lands mortgaged and heavily taxed, while the law was on the side of their oppressors. Their social prob-

WATER WHEELS AT HAMATH
Courtesy of Professor G. L. Robinson, D.D.

A very picturesque though wasteful way of utilizing water power. In a few years the music of these wheels will be replaced by the chug of a gasoline engine.

lems were those of the modern city: special class privilege, misuse of authority, unjust distribution of the burden of taxation, and the wicked exploitation of the masses. Against this dark background arise the great prophets Amos, the herdsman of Bethel, and Hosea, a native of northern Israel.

In Amos's brilliant denunciation and vivid figures of speech we learn for the first time the great truth that God does not enjoy burnt offerings, but rather the sign of justice and righteousness in the lives of his people. But justice and righteousness were not the ideals of Israel; rather they were success, wealth, and ease, even though these were attained by the most unjust methods. Amos was promptly silenced and banished from Bethel.

Hosea, his great contemporary, teaches that God loves even while he punishes faithless Israel, and that God's justice and love are arguments why men should love one another and be just. In these two we find anticipated by eight centuries the teaching of Jesus that love to God and love to man are essential to the formation of a perfect society.

Jeroboam's reign, therefore, though given such scanty treatment in Scripture, deserves to go down in history as an epoch-making time.

JEROBOAM STRENGTHENS ISRAEL BY CONQUESTS

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and reigned forty-one years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

Yet he restored the border of Israel from the entering in of Hamath to the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spoke by the hand of his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher. For the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter. Neither was there any helper for Israel. And the Lord said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jeroboam slept with his fathers even with the kings of Israel.

Amos Foretells the Doom of Israel

If we wish to learn what life was like and what men cared for in these days, we must not expect to find it in these brief outlines of the conquests and defeats of the kings, but in the messages of the prophets. The Book of Amos is most interesting, because it is the oldest complete book, in practically its original form, that we have in the Bible. It was written in the days of Jeroboam II and Uzziah, and its writer was a citizen of the southern kingdom who went into the northern kingdom, at Bethel, to prophesy.

Amos was a shepherd and a grower of sycomore figs. His language is such as could have been used only by a countryman. He speaks of "the cart that is full of sheaves," "grain sifted as in a sieve," "the locusts destroying the aftermath," "baskets of summer fruit," plowing and reaping, the lion's roar, and the shepherd rescuing his sheep.

The Prophet Appears at a Festival in Bethel

Then Amaziah the priest of Beth-el sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying: "Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos saith, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land.'"

Also Amaziah said to Amos, "O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy; but prophesy not again any more at Beth-el: for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is the king's court."

Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a shepherd, and a cultivator of sycomore figs. But the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

"Now therefore hear thou the word of the Lord: 'Thou sayest, Prophesy not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac. Therefore thus saith the Lord: Thou shalt die in a foreign land, and Israel shall surely go into captivity out of his land.'"

Oppressors of Their Fellow-Men Shall Suffer

(In his book, in which probably were written down his carefully prepared speeches, Amos told how the Lord was about to punish the surrounding nations for their wickedness; and then he attacked vigorously the sins of Israel. In these stirring verses we see, as if we were walking through the land itself, how injustice and luxury together were making the two nations weak.)

Thus saith the Lord:
For three transgressions of Israel, and for four,
I will not turn away the punishment thereof;
Because they sold the righteous for silver,
And the poor for a pair of shoes;
Who trample to the dust of the earth the head of the poor,
And turn aside the way of the meek.

Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy,
Even to make the poor of the land to fail,

Saying: "When will the new moon be gone, that
we may sell grain?
And the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat
(Making the measure small, and the shekel great,
And falsifying the balances by deceit);
That we may buy the poor for silver,
And the needy for a pair of shoes;
Yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?"
The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob,
"Surely I will never forget any of their works."
Shall not the land tremble for this,
And every one mourn that dwelleth therein?

(What made these crimes most inexcusable was that they were committed by a people who had always enjoyed the special care of the Almighty.)

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth;
Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."

(We have no record of how influential were Amos's warnings, or what was his later history. There is an old tradition that he was wounded by the son of the high priest, and went home to die. His words had great power in giving courage to prophets who came after him.)

ZECHARIAH

In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah [Uzziah] king of Judah did Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

And the rest of the acts of Zechariah, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

This was the word of the Lord which he spoke to Jehu, saying, "Thy sons shall sit upon the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." And so it came to pass.

SHALLUM

Shallum was king only in name. By violence he won the throne, and by violence he lost it in a single month.

Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria.

For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

MENAHEM

Although previous kings had paid tribute to Assyria, it seems not to have been until now that the growing and insolent power invaded the land. They demanded, and Menahem paid, a heavier tribute, to secure a truce.

The Shadow of Assyria Falls over Israel

In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

Now Menahem smote Tiphsah, and all that were therein, and the borders thereof, from Tirzah; because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it.

And Pul [Tiglath-pileser] the king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him, to confirm the kingdom in his hand. And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.

And the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Menahem slept with his fathers.

Hosea's Message of Good Cheer

(While Amos was yet alive, another prophet arose in the northern kingdom. He began to write or speak in the time of Jeroboam II, but the larger part of his message was during those short and unsteady reigns that followed, that gave the Assyrians their easy opportunity. We do not know his occupation, but, like Amos, he was a lover of nature and of the country. He speaks of the corn and wine, the early and latter rain, the scent of the vine blossom, the beauty of the olive in sunshine and breeze; and he notices "the silly dove without understanding," "the heifer that loveth to tread out the corn," and the relief of the cattle when the yoke is taken off. His personal life was an unhappy one. His wife had left her home, and the care of his children came doubly upon him. He used his own experiences to illustrate his message. He took his unworthy wife back to him. By forgiving her, he learned the forgiveness of God. Just as he had wooed back his wife, so the Lord would try to woo back Israel, who had gone from their God like a foolish wife. This is his promise:)

"Behold, I will woo her,
And I will speak to her heart.
And I will give her her vineyards from thence,
And the valley of Achor [Trouble] for a door of hope:
And she shall sing there as in the days of her youth,
And as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.

"She shall call me 'my husband';
And I will betroth thee to me forever;
Yea, I will betroth thee to me in righteousness,
And in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.
I will even betroth thee to me in faithfulness;
And thou shalt know the Lord."

(Again, out of his experience as a loving father, Hosea draws another likeness. The Lord is like a father, and Israel is his rebellious child:)

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him,
And called my son out of Egypt.
I taught Ephraim also to walk,
Taking them by their arms;
But they knew not that I healed them.
I drew them with cords of a man,
With leading strings of love.

How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?
How shall I cast thee off, Israel?
How shall I make thee as Admah?
How shall I set thee as Zeboiim?
My heart is stirred within me,
My sympathies are kindled together.
I will not execute the fierceness of my anger.
I will not return to destroy Ephraim;
For I am God, and not man,
The Holy One in the midst of thee:
And I will not enter the city to consume."

PEKAHIAH

In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

But Pekah the son of Remaliah, his captain, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the castle of the king's house, with Argob and Arieh, and with him were fifty men of the Gileadites; and he killed him, and reigned in his place.

And the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

PEKAH

Paying tribute to the Assyrians only made them demand the more. Syria, Philistia, and Israel made a league for mutual protection. Israel tried to force Judah in, but the result only weakened them both against the common enemy.

SYRIA AND ISRAEL ATTACK JERUSALEM

In the fifty-second year of Azariah [Uzziah] king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to war against it; but could not prevail against it.

And it was told the house of David, saying, "Syria is confederate with Ephraim." And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest are moved with the wind.

It was then that wise and reassuring counsel was given to the weak-hearted king of Judah by the great statesman, Isaiah, of whose patriotic work we learned in the history of the southern kingdom. The incident is given in full in that history. Isaiah told King Ahaz that the two northern kings were only "two smoking firebrands":

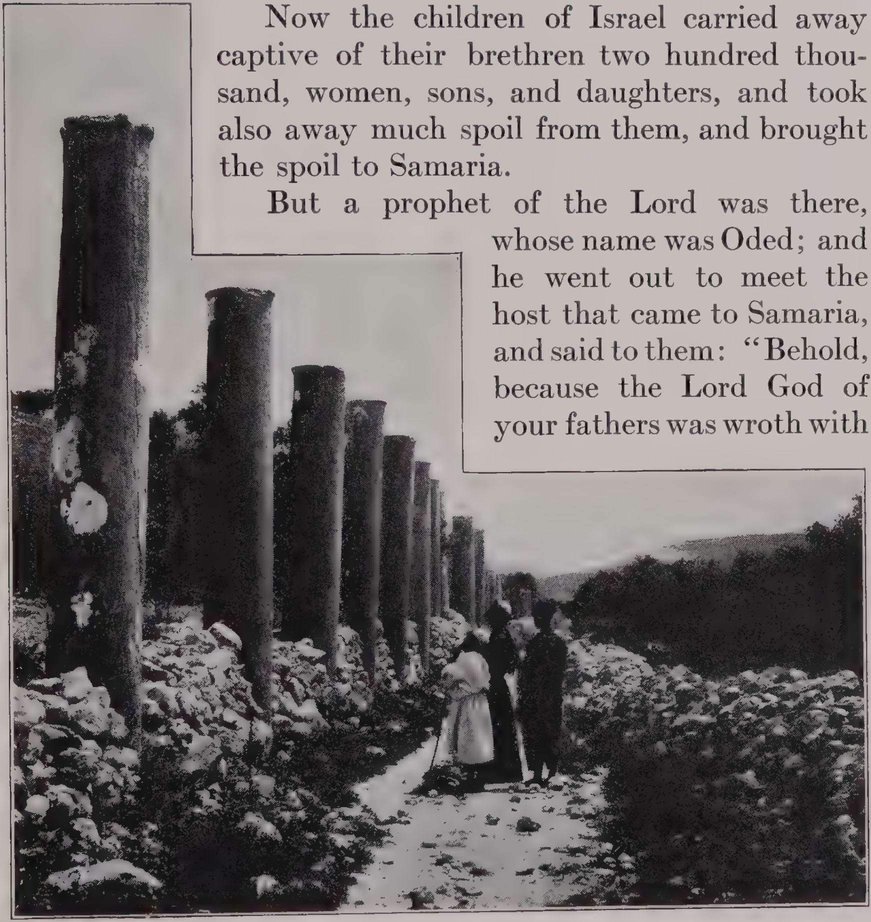
"It shall not stand,
Neither shall it come to pass.
Within threescore and five years
Shall Ephraim be broken,
That it be not a people.
If ye will not hold fast,
Ye shall not stand fast."

CIVIL WAR ENDS IN A PERIOD OF GOOD FEELING

The Book of Chronicles tells how the northerners vanquished their Southern brethren, and then were merciful to them.

Now the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.

But a prophet of the Lord was there, whose name was Oded; and he went out to meet the host that came to Samaria, and said to them: "Behold, because the Lord God of your fathers was wroth with



HEROD'S STREET OF COLUMNS, SAMARIA

On this terrace Herod built a magnificent street of columns which ran quite around the hill. At this point there are four rows of columns, each of them a single stone eighteen feet high. Between the center rows ran the wheel traffic, while between the side rows came and went the crowd of buyers. Between the columns themselves were the temporary booths of traders, their heads sheltered from the burning sun by many-colored awnings. Surely this was a splendid place to trade,—fresh breezes blowing from the sea, mountains round about, the busy throng chattering happily, unmindful of the menace of wars and earthquakes.

Judah, he hath delivered them in to your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage that reacheth up to heaven. And now ye purpose to bring the children of Judah and Jerusalem into subjection for bondmen and bondwomen to you; but are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God? Now hear me therefore, and send back the captives that ye have taken captive of your brethren; for the fierce wrath of the Lord is upon you."

Then certain of the heads of the children of Ephraim stood up against them that came from the war, and said to them: "Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against the Lord already, ye intend to add more to our sins and to our trespass: for our trespass is great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel."

So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation. And the men who were mentioned by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.

Assyria Turns to the Conquest of Palestine

Tiglath-pileser overpowered Damascus and killed King Rezin. There is left an inscription of his reign which states: "The land of Samaria, the whole of its inhabitants, together with their booty, I carried off to Assyria. Pekah, their king, I slew. Hoshea I appointed as ruler over them." It was not literally true that he carried off all the people of the northern kingdom, but from henceforward Samaria was a vassal state of the great Assyrian empire.

In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee—all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria.

And Hoshea made a conspiracy against Pekah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

Isaiah's Description of the Assyrian Invasion

(King Ahaz of Jerusalem did not accept the counsel of Isaiah "to take heed and keep quiet," but sent off messengers posthaste to Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, tendering his submission, handing over also a huge tribute, and pleading for deliverance. This set the Assyrians in motion toward the conquest of Palestine, and led to the conquests listed in the preceding section. Isaiah describes the Assyrian advance in graphic terms, as if he were an eyewitness:)

See! hastily, swiftly they come,
None weary, none stumbling among them;
The band of their loins never loosed,
The thong of their shoes never torn.
Their arrows are sharpened,
Their bows are all bent,
The hoofs of their horses are counted as flint,
And their wheels as the whirlwind.
Their roar is like that of the lioness,
And like the young lions they roar,
Thundering, seizing the prey,
And bearing it off to a place of security.
They roar against them
Like the roaring of the sea:
And if one look upon the land,
Behold, darkness and distress.

Amos Foresees the Captivity

Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive,
And the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.

And it shall come to pass,
If there remain ten men in one house, they shall die.
And a man's uncle shall take him up,
And he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house,

And shall say to him that is by the sides of the house,
"Is there yet any with thee?"
And he shall say, "No."
Then shall he say, "Hold thy tongue:
For we may not make mention of the name of the Lord."

But, behold, I will raise up against you a nation,
O house of Israel,
Saith the Lord, the God of hosts;
And they shall afflict you
From the entering in of Hamath to the river of the wilderness.

HOSHEA

Hoshea was no worse than his predecessors, but the Assyrians were now the greatest power in the world. Turning for help to Egypt, which failed him, as usual, Hoshea was besieged in his capital. When Samaria fell, the nation finally perished.

The Capital City Falls Before Sargon

In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel, and he reigned nine years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him.

Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and brought him tribute.

And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison. Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and he besieged it three years.

In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king [Sargon] of Assyria took Samaria,[54] and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

The Captivity Is the Punishment of Idolatry

And it was so, because the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, and walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up images and posts in every high hill, and under every green tree: and there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger; for they served idols, whereof the Lord had said to them, "Ye shall not do this thing."

Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying: "Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets."

Notwithstanding, they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them.

And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made posts, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served

Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.

Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

And the Lord rejected all the house of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.

For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets.

So Israel was carried away out of their own land to Assyria to this day.[55]

Aliens Settle the Land

And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Avva, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

Every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. So they feared the Lord, but served their own gods.

To this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after their statutes, nor after their ordinances, nor after the law and the commandment which the Lord commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel; with whom the Lord had made a covenant.

This mixed blood and mixed worship were always offensive to the Jews of the southern kingdom. Instances of this are given in the accounts of Josiah, Zerubbabel, and Nehemiah; and in New Testament times it was still true that "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest!
The wild dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country—Israel but the grave!

—*Lord Byron*

Isaiah's Vision of a New Day

(The statesman Isaiah was watching these sad events from Jerusalem. He had perhaps seen personally, he had at least pictured, the irresistible advance of the Assyrians. And now when the doom had come, he burst into prophetic song. The king of Israel had failed, the people were in martyrdom, but the faith of Isaiah was not dead. There should come, so he sang, another King who should never fail, and even at the North, in the darkened lands of Zebulun and Naphtali and in the Galilee of the nations, another light should dawn.)

They shall pass through the land, sore distressed and hungry; and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward. And they shall look to the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness.

But there shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali; but in the latter time hath he made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

A King Shall Establish Peace

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light;
They that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon
them hath the light shined.
Thou hast multiplied the nation,
Thou hast increased their joy:

They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest,
As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.
For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden,
And the staff of his shoulder,
The rod of his oppressor,
As in the day of Midian.
For all the armor of the armed man in the tumult,
And the garments rolled in blood,
Shall be for burning,
For fuel of fire.

For unto us a child is born,
Unto us a son is given;
And the government shall be upon his shoulder.

And his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government
And of peace there shall be no end,
Upon the throne of David,
And upon his kingdom,
To establish it, and to order it
With judgment and with justice
From henceforth even forever.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

The King That Shall Never Fail

Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness,
And princes shall rule in judgment.
And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind,
And a covert from the tempest;
As rivers of water in a dry place,
As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim,
And the ears of them that hear shall hearken.
The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge,

And the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak
plainly.
The vile person shall be no more called liberal,
Nor the churl said to be bountiful.
For the vile person will speak villainy,
And his heart will work iniquity,
To practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord,
To make empty the soul of the hungry;
He will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.
The instruments also of the churl are evil:
He deviseth wicked devices
To destroy the poor with lying words,
Even when the needy speaketh right.
But the liberal deviseth liberal things;
And by liberal things shall he stand.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

THE BOOK OF THE KINGDOM

The Crown with Crossed Scepters is the appropriate symbol for The Book of The Kingdom, for the scepter is the most venerable symbol of power, dominion, authority, kingly rule. The crossed scepters signify conflict, one rule in opposition to another, kingdom against kingdom, struggle for supremacy. The crown is the symbol of the victor. It was given to the man who won, and it conferred upon him the kingship, visibly, that all might recognize the king. All history has been a struggle for scepters and crowns, of one sort or another; and almost all kings have been forced at last to cast their crowns at the feet of some other king, the victorious successor. Ultimately the last shall cast them at the feet of Christ, who shall reign forever, King of Kings.

THE GREAT KINGS

SAUL

1. **The Origin of the Monarchy.** We seem to have two intermingled accounts of the origin of the monarchy. In the one, the monarchy is hailed with enthusiasm. Samuel takes delight in anointing Saul king, and views this important step in Israel's development as being in accord with Jehovah's will. In the other, the establishment of the monarchy is considered a step backward, and the request of the Israelites for a king as the reflection of an ambition that is strongly tinged with militarism and really involves the rejection of Jehovah's leadership. Samuel, in this account, is loath to take any part in ushering it in and does so only with great reluctance. The former is probably the more acceptable.

2. **High Place.** The high place was a sanctuary upon the top of a hill. Every town had such a holy place with an altar upon which sacrifices were offered. During festival seasons some of the more important of these sanctuaries were attended by worshipers from near and far.

3. **"He Prophesied Among Them."** In this early period prophecy in Israel was quite different from the lofty teaching of Amos or Isaiah, or even from the fervid preaching style which some of the later prophets used. Our narrative says the Spirit of God rushed upon Saul, and he prophesied. Saul appeared to be vigorously seized and lifted into exalted emotion by a power outside himself. It was little wonder that those who had up to this time known him as a modest, unassuming farmer lad were amazed to see him caught up into the power of such intense spiritual excitement.

4. **"The Children of Belial."** This means the sons of worthlessness, or the good-for-nothings,—base, reckless fellows.

5. **The Assault on Jabesh-gilead.** This event, which stirred up Saul to take aggressive command of the Israelite forces, took place just about a month after he had been proclaimed king at Mizpah. During this month Saul had been quietly at work on his father's farm.

6. **Seven Days.** Jabesh-gilead was east of the Jordan, but the great bulk of Israel was on the other side, to the west. Seven days would be needed in order to get in communication with the rest of the Israelites.

7. **Gilgal** was appropriately chosen for the popular demonstration. It marked the first station of the Israelites after they had crossed the Jordan under Joshua in their conquest of Canaan. Here the first Passover had been observed. Here the Ark had remained during the struggle for foothold. It thus had rich historical tradition. Then, too, the pressure of the Philistines on the west had pushed the center of Israel back to the

Jordan, and Gilgal had become the chief religious as well as military center of the nation.

8. Saul's Disobedience. Saul's nervous impatience in refusing to wait for Samuel to offer the sacrifices revealed to the prophet a fundamental lack in the character of the new king. In this incident Samuel saw how little there was in Saul's make-up of real loyalty to the divine will as interpreted by the prophet.

9. "Cursed be the Man that Eateth Food." Saul's aim in this "taboo" was to secure the continued help of Jehovah by a great fast, universally observed throughout the army.

10. Eating Flesh with the Blood. According to ancient thought, the blood was the seat of life. A sanctity came to be attached to the blood as having mysterious divine potency and as belonging to God. The ritual required that before any animal flesh was eaten, the blood must be drained off, and, by pouring upon the ground, given to God. This ceremonial regulation the famished soldiers did not observe.

11. "Give a Perfect Lot." This was done by the use of what were probably colored stones, called "Urim and Thummim." These were put together in a bag for the purpose, and when a decision was desired on any question for which the priest was consulted, one of the stones was withdrawn. This rendered the divine verdict.

12. Saul's Evil Spirit. Saul began to be subject to fits of despondency and violence. These spells of mental disorder came frequently and suddenly, leaving him under a cloud of melancholy, with an insane desire to kill. It was hoped that the soothing power of music would restore him to mental poise.

DAVID

13. David and Goliath. It seems that there are two stories of the introduction of David to Saul. In one, David, a skilful player on the lyre, is brought from Bethlehem to bring relief to Saul in his fits of melancholia by playing soothing music. In the other, David's victory over the Philistine champion Goliath brings him to the attention of Saul, who summons him into his presence and retains him as one of his warriors.

14. An Image. The image used by Michal to deceive the messengers of Saul was the teraphim. It is spoken of here as if it were a thing that would be found in every household. It was used in connection with the worship of Jehovah, and was dispensed with only when the prophets taught Israel to worship Jehovah without the use of images. The image of this narrative seems to have been of the size or shape of a man. But in the story of Rachel it is clear that the teraphim was so small that it could be hidden under the saddle of a camel.

15. SAUL'S MONTHLY FEAST. The Hebrews divided the year by the moon's changes, each quarter thus marking a Sabbath, and the new moon forming a sort of monthly Sabbath of special sanctity. And as religion and loyalty were inseparably joined, the whole household of Saul must gather at new moon, first for sacrifice to Jehovah, and then for a family feast on the flesh thus offered. With care the meat might be kept for a second or even a third day. To be absent from one's place in such a circle, unless ceremonially unclean for the day, was counted not only a neglect of worship but an act of disloyalty to the king.

16. NOB. It appears that David started toward his own home at Bethlehem. Nob is on the way there, not very far from Jerusalem.

17. "SHOWBREAD." This bread was called "bread of the Presence." A table spread with food and drink was set before God wherever there was a house or a temple dedicated to Jehovah. On this table was placed bread which was exchanged at regular intervals for fresh loaves hot from the oven. This bread was thus placed before the presence of God, and was called "bread of the Presence" or "bread of God." The loaves which were replaced by fresh bread were used as food by the priests, and under exceptional circumstances, as here, even by laymen who, from the point of view of the times, were not defiled.

18. THE CAVE OF ADULLAM. This was in the lowlands of Judah, near David's own home. He was now in a region with which he was perfectly familiar and where he knew how to hide from the pursuit of Saul.

19. MOAB. This incident of the protection of David's parents in the land of Moab is full of dramatic interest when we recall the tradition that Ruth, the Moabitess, was the great-grandmother of David. It would seem that David had as the basis for his request of the Moabite king the Moabite strain in his own blood.

20. THREE OF THE THIRTY CAPTAINS. In David's band of men at this period of his career there were three groups. The Cherethites and Pelethites were a band of about six hundred Philistine mercenaries. In addition to this brave and efficient bodyguard there were two groups of heroic warriors that stood out conspicuously above the rest. These were the order of "the thirty," whose names are elsewhere mentioned, and, highest of all, the order of "the three," composed of Jashobeam, Eleazar and Shammah. The exploit of the three chivalrous warriors here described was done by three from the order of "the thirty."

21. "ABISHAI" and "BENAIAH." These warriors were worthy of special mention among "the thirty," but were not of equal rank with the order of "the three."

22. "BRING HITHER THE EPHOD." The ephod was carried by the priest and was used in consulting Jehovah. To use the ephod for securing

such divine counsel was the distinctive prerogative of the priest. It was probably a portable image before which the sacred lots Urim and Thummim were cast. It was thus a part of the apparatus of communion with Jehovah.

23. DAVID CUTS OFF SAUL'S SKIRT. This was certainly a revelation to Saul of David's daring, of his skill, and of his chivalrous generosity, for any one who could do this could certainly have easily murdered the sleeping king. But it was more than this. To Saul it was a serious insult to his royalty, for David was thus making sport of him. The incident reminds us somewhat of what happened to David's own ambassadors when upon the death of the Ammonite king, Nahash, he sent greetings of condolence and congratulation to his son and successor Hanun. Suspicious of David's motives, Hanun seized the Israelite ambassadors, "shaved off the one-half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle," and sent them home.

24. "HE IS THE ANOINTED OF THE LORD." There is a superstitious awe in David's refusal to kill Saul. He was the anointed of Jehovah, and David felt that any one who harmed Jehovah's representative would thereby subject himself to the divine displeasure. But mingled with this, David shows a sensitive nature which stands in brilliant contrast to the ruthlessness of his men. He reveals a certain reverence for the office of king apart from the occupant of the office; and this stays his hand in the moment when the king was utterly in his power.

25. "AFTER A DEAD DOG, AFTER A FLEA." David practically says to Saul, "Why do you bring your picked troops against one no more harmful than a dead dog or a flea?" But he also suggests, with a certain sly humor, that he is as difficult to catch as a flea. Just when Saul thinks he has him in his power, David escapes out of his hand unscathed.

26. ABIGAIL'S PLEA TO DAVID. The plea which Abigail poured out to David to persuade him to give up his plan of revenge upon her husband Nabal is one of the cleverest bits of argumentative appeal in the Bible. It is a model of womanly intuition, ingenuity, and tact. She appeals to his common sense. "Don't let yourself get riled up over what Nabal says, for he is a fool." She follows out the maxim that "the way to a man's heart is through his stomach," making her appeal as she focuses his gaze upon the loaves, wine, sheep, grain, raisins, and figs which she tactfully presents to him for the use of his voracious men. She appeals to his vanity by her humility and her assertion of how wonderfully clear it is that he is under Jehovah's special protection. She appeals to his conscience. "Do nothing to Nabal that will later convict you of shedding blood without adequate cause." All through her passionate appeal, by the unconscious beauty of her womanliness she argues more eloquently even than through her words. It is a graphic picture, the beautiful, defenseless woman on her knees before Israel's most fair and chivalrous king. The outcome of her mission suggests to us Goethe's words, "The Eternal Womanly leads us upward and on."

27. "Go, Serve Other Gods." David here implies that Saul's jealous pursuit is forcing him into a region which is outside of Jehovah's jurisdiction. He suggests that he must seek protection outside of Israel if Saul continues his hunt of hate. The higher thought that the jurisdiction of Jehovah extends beyond the territorial borders of Israel had not yet arisen. If David had to take up his residence outside of Israel, he would then be within the jurisdiction of the gods of that region.

28. David with Achish. What David had anticipated that Saul's pursuit would force upon him now happens. With a guard of six hundred men he offers himself to Achish, the Philistine king of Gath. Achish welcomes him and gives him the town of Ziklag as a fortress and base of action. David thus becomes an independent chieftain in the service of Achish. This is surely a dramatic situation—David, the hero of Israel's victory over the Philistine armies, now a vassal to a Philistine king!

29. A Military Policy. When David and his men returned from the successful pursuit of the Amalekites who had plundered their city Ziklag, they brought with them much booty. Some of the lower element of his troops were opposed to sharing any of this plunder with those who had merely "kept the home fires burning"; who had protected the women and children and guarded the baggage, but had not taken part in the pursuit. David, however, saw how essential to their victory had been the last dramatic service of the people who had simply kept things steady at home while David and his troops punished the Amalekites. He expressed at this time a principle which thereupon became the recognized military policy of Israel, "As his share is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his share be that tarrieth by the baggage: they shall share alike."

30. The Tragedy of Saul. One of the profoundest of the tragedies of history is the career of Saul. Of the climax of the tragedy on Gilboa where Saul took his own life, Dr. A. B. Davidson says, "Here was a great mind knowing its failure, conscious of its incapacity, yet resenting it, mad against circumstances and men and Providence, not going out like a slowly smouldering fire, but burning out like a volcano." Browning, in his matchless interpretation of Saul, pictures David craving to help him and brooding over the thought that possibly even beyond death there might be another chance for Saul to win the moral victory which he had failed to win in this life. David craves to

"Interpose at the difficult minute, snatch Saul the mistake,
Saul the failure, the ruin he seems now,—and bid him awake
From the dream, the probation, the prelude, to find himself set
Clear and safe in new light and new life,—a new harmony yet
To be run, and continued, and ended—who knows?—or endure!
The man taught enough by life's dream, of the rest to make sure;
By the pain-throb, triumphantly winning intensified bliss,
And the next world's reward and repose, by the struggles in this."

31. Beth-shan (strangely named "House of Safety" or "House of Quiet") was the fortified gateway on the east end of the Valley of Jezreel, facing the Jordan. It is one of the most historic sites in the world. Israelites, Philistines, Egyptians, Saracens, Crusaders, Frenchmen, Persians, Druses, Turks, Arabs, and English have fought in sight of Beth-shan, or for its capture. Culminating in the month of September, 1922, most interesting discoveries have been made in the ruins of this city of five layers of wreckage. Among these, says a writer in the New York Times, is a stone with its laudation of an Egyptian king of the twelfth century B.C. In that same hillock have just been found the first sarcophagi of the Philistines, whose very name once stirred Samson to his show of strength, and now survives as a challenge to the cultured. It is the hope of the archæologist yet to find there reports, in the house of the Philistines' idols, of the battles, of which we have only the accounts by the war correspondents on the other side; for it was to one of the stones in this mausolean village that the body of Saul was fastened, his head having been circulated in the "land of the Philistines round about."

What will stir the Western world even more deeply is the reported discovery in this same mound of the sarcophagus of a cousin of Herod the Great, who was alive at the time of the "slaughter of the innocents," and, as is suggested, probably had a part in it. It is to be hoped that these relics are but the beginning of recoveries in that land which is a holy land to three great faiths of the world.

32. David's "In Memoriam." Far better known than Tennyson's great poem *In Memoriam* is this lament over Saul and Jonathan. It is written largely in the poetic meter which the Hebrews used in their dirges. There is no more beautiful or impressive elegy in all literature than this. The sincerity of David's love for Saul even unto the end, in spite of the multitudinous wrongs he had suffered at the king's hands, breathes through its lines. The classic friendship of David and Jonathan is here enshrined in words that make it one of the noblest and most sincere expressions of heart feeling that we have in the Bible.

33. The Ark Brought to Jerusalem. The bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem was one of the most significant accomplishments of David's reign. The Ark was to the Hebrews more than the symbol of Jehovah's presence. It was his very dwelling place. When the Ark was brought into Jerusalem, Jehovah took up his dwelling in the capital, and Jerusalem began to be what it later became to the Jews, the Holy City. The genius David had expressed in choosing Jerusalem for the capital and political center of the nation, a rallying point for both the North and South, he now further shows by making it the religious center as well. The attitude of awe and fear with which the early Hebrews regarded the Ark is well shown in the story of its adventures in the Philistine country, given in Volume Three of this work.

SOLOMON

34. Religious Toleration. From a modern point of view the policy of Solomon in encouraging the introduction of the worship of foreign gods might be considered religious toleration. Through foreign relations established for commercial reasons with various surrounding nations, and through the introduction of foreigners to work on his building enterprises, Solomon had made the nation cosmopolitan in population. From the point of view of statesmanship, he conceived the introduction of foreign gods as conducive to internal contentment and harmony. But the prophetic souls of Israel saw the peril which faced the deeper faith of the nation in such a policy and protested against it with passionate earnestness. It meant death to Israel's unique faith in Jehovah.

35. Estimate of Solomon. Solomon lacks the rich and varied human traits of David. His personality does not abound in vivid realistic features. His religion has in it no ecstatic elements, but is sober, dignified, and largely official. He lacks the atmosphere of adversity which was so characteristic of the whole career of David. He was, however, a great commercial leader with a genius for establishing helpful international contacts. He led Israel out into world relationships such as she had never before had. She now felt the urge of a cosmopolitan life. He was also a great organizer and builder. The spirit of enterprise was his in a most remarkable degree. He brought into Israel a great impetus along the line of externals in material civilization. But he was fundamentally a despot. His chief concern was not his people but his court, his buildings, his costly displays. "He was more interested in the privileges of the throne and its comforts than in its lofty duties and mission."

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

JUDAH, THE KINGDOM OF THE SOUTH

36. Causes of the Division of the Kingdom. The division of Israel into the two kingdoms of Israel (the northern) and Judah (the southern) had certain causes, some of which root far back in history. The insolent autocracy of Rehoboam was simply the match that set fire to the fuel which had been accumulating for over a century.

(1) From the days of the invasion of Canaan, the north was divided from the south by a strong line of Canaanite cities, so that during the rule of the "judges" these two sections were at no time united.

(2) The South, through the absorption of a large native element, had neutralized its sense of kinship with the North both racially and religiously.

(3) During the united kingdom there had clearly existed a policy of favoritism: now of the North, as in the reign of Saul, and now of the South, as with David and Solomon. This had created jealousy between the two

sections of Israel. During the days of the monarchy the names Israel and Judah again and again recur as designations of the North and South, respectively. Solomon's autocratic policy of taxing the North while he showed partiality to the South brought this discontent to a head.

(4) The North was conscious of superiority over the South in territory, economic resources and leadership. The revolt of the North under Jeroboam is easily understood when these underlying causes are taken into account. The name Israel was appropriated by the revolting tribes.

37. SHISHAK'S INVASION. This king is Pharaoh Sheshonk I of Egypt, the founder of the twenty-second Egyptian dynasty. The Biblical account mentions only his campaign against Judah. It is clear, however, from his own account of it that he conquered Israel also. On the walls of the ornamental gateway to the temple which he erected at Karnak on the Nile, he has left a relief on which, in conversational form, he pictures his victorious campaign. This graphic account is accompanied by a list of the cities conquered at that time. The names of about one hundred and twenty of these have been deciphered, and they show conclusively how widespread were his conquests and how vigorous was his control.

38. ZECHARIAH'S FATE. This account of the tragic fate of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, is referred to by Jesus as an illustration of the way in which the prophets have been treated by the Jews and their predecessors. The name sometimes has been confused with that of the prophet whose book is in the Old Testament; but the historical reference is clear. Jesus refers to Abel as the first victim and Zechariah as the last, because in the Hebrew Old Testament the first book is Genesis and the last is Chronicles, in the latter part of which this story is found.

39. THE WAR AGAINST AHAZ, undertaken by Israel and Syria, was in order to compel Judah to join with these two imperiled nations in a defensive alliance against Assyria. Ahaz, believing that Assyria was invincible, was determined to submit to the Assyrian king as a vassal and so to claim his aid in the crisis he was now facing. The plan of the two kings was to dethrone Ahaz and set up in his place their partisan, "the son of Tabeel," who would thereupon reverse the king's policy and throw Judah's strength into the scale. Isaiah's advice to Ahaz was to make no alliances at all, but to have faith and watch Jehovah win.

40. THE CAPTURE OF SAMARIA was by Sargon, apparently the founder of a new Assyrian dynasty, who succeeded Shalmaneser V during the progress of the siege.

41. SENNACHERIB BESIEGES JERUSALEM. Sennacherib was the most graphic of all the Assyrian kings in the description of his campaigns. He has left an inscription describing this campaign in his habitually boastful fashion. True to the Assyrian custom of saying nothing of defeats or

thwartings, he does not attempt to explain why he did not completely capture Jerusalem.

"Kings of the Westland, all of them, an extensive district, brought their heavy tribute together with their possessions into my presence and kissed my feet . . . And as to Hezekiah, the Judean, who had not submitted to my yoke, forty-six of his strongholds, fortified cities, and smaller cities of their environs without number, with the onset of battering rams and the attack of engines, mines, breaches and axes, I besieged. I captured two hundred thousand, one hundred and fifty people, small and great, male and female; horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen and sheep without number, I brought out of their midst, and counted as booty. He himself I shut up like a caged bird in Jerusalem, his capital city; I erected beleaguering works against him, and turned back by command every one who came out of his city gate. . . . As to Hezekiah himself, the fear of the luster of my lordship overcame him, and the Urbi and his favorite soldiers, whom he had brought in to strengthen Jerusalem, his capital city, deserted. With thirty talents of gold, eight hundred talents of silver, precious stones . . . beds of ivory, stationary ivory thrones, elephants' hide . . . all sorts of objects, a heavy treasure; also his daughters, the women of his palace, male and female musicians he sent after me to Nineveh, my capital city, and sent his messenger to present the gift and to do homage."

42. HEZEKIAH'S RESISTANCE. As a vassal of Assyria, Hezekiah was willing to pay the exorbitant tribute levied by Sennacherib on his nation. But he was not willing to open the gates of Jerusalem to these insolent officers and their detachment of soldiery. He knew that Sennacherib intended to deport him and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as the Rabshakeh later frankly explained to the people; and rather than submit to this, he was ready with God's help to meet the issue.

43. THE MYSTERIOUS WITHDRAWAL OF SENNACHERIB'S ARMY. The Assyrians under Sennacherib were on the border of Egypt. Hezekiah, fearing Sennacherib's next move would certainly be against Jerusalem, is counseled by Isaiah that Jerusalem will not be taken and Sennacherib will be turned back. "By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and he shall not come unto this," saith Jehovah. "For I will defend this city to save it." This forecast of Isaiah was remarkably fulfilled. We learn through Herodotus that while the Assyrians were on the Egyptian border preparing to attack Egypt, "there came in the night a multitude of field mice, which ate all the quivers and bowstrings of the enemy [Assyria], and the thongs of their shields. In consequence, on the next day they fled; and being deprived of their arms, many of them fell." Herodotus goes on to say that in an Egyptian temple there is a statue of the king who had thus been relieved of the Assyrian offensive, holding a mouse in his hand and bearing an inscription which reads, "Let any who look on me reverence the gods." George Adam Smith thinks that Sennacherib's army fell

victim to the bubonic plague. This first attacks rats and mice. In their suffering they swarm human dwellings and shelters and rapidly spread the awful disease.

44. HEZEKIAH'S CONDUIT. A few years ago a Jewish boy noticed some writing on a stone near the mouth of the rock channel through which the water ran into the pool of Siloam. It turned out to be what is probably the oldest piece of Hebrew writing known. It reads: "On the day of excavation they hewed the mine, each to meet his fellow pick to pick, and the water flowed from the source to the pool." This means that King Hezekiah's workmen worked from both ends and met exactly in the middle of the tunnel.

45. THE BOOK HILKIAH FOUND. The book which Hilkiah, the priest, discovered, and which he and Shaphan, the scribe, at once brought to the attention of the king, was the chief section of what is now the Book of Deuteronomy. The dynamic influence of this book upon Judah alone ranks it as one of the most revolutionary documents of history. It was written by one imbued with the prophetic ideals which received their initial urge from the mind and heart of Moses. The author attempted to express this prophetic teaching in statutes of such character that they would help people to attain the prophetic ideals. The book was really "a manual addressed to the people, and intended for popular use." It had two central ideas. (1) The high places which the Hebrews from time immemorial had taken over from the Canaanites as places of worship, were all to be destroyed. (2) Worship was to be centralized at the temple in Jerusalem. The local high places, or sanctuaries, had become centers of religious rites which had many impure remnants of heathenism and idolatry in them. Consequently they were a serious menace to the purity of Israel's worship. Centering the worship of the nation at Jerusalem would guarantee its purity and help Israel realize in faith and practice the prophetic teaching that there was but one God, and that he alone must be worshiped.

46. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S CHARACTER. The Babylonian monarch who captured Jerusalem was not only the instrument of Jehovah; he was a man of piety. This prayer, which he offered to the god Marduk, reminds us in its sincerity of a Hebrew psalm:

"O eternal ruler! Lord of all being!
May the king whom thou lovest,
And whose name thou hast proclaimed,
Flourish as is pleasing to thee
Do thou lead aright his life,
Guide him in a straight path.
I am the prince who obeys thee,
The creature of thy hand;

Thou hast created me,
And dominion over all people
Thou hast intrusted to me.
According to thy grace, O Lord,
Which thou bestowest on all people,
Cause me to love thy supreme rule,
And inspire in my heart
The worship of thy godhead,
And grant what seems good to thee,
Because thou hast fashioned my life."

This devout side of Nebuchadnezzar's character makes us wonder if some religious experience had come to him, such as is described in the Book of Daniel, where we are told of "the lion with eagle's wings" that "was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon the feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it."

47. The Jews in Egypt. These Jews about to seek refuge in Egypt were not pioneers, but followed blazed trails already made by their fellow-countrymen. By this time many Jewish settlements already existed in Egypt, and considerable intercourse was carried on between them and the mother country. No doubt relatives of those left in Jerusalem were among these Egyptian colonists, and it would be quite natural that the lure of Egypt should be attractive to those seeking asylum from the turmoil in Jerusalem. Through recent discoveries of a great number of papyri documents on the Island of Elephantine in the Nile, a flood of light has been thrown upon the life of one such Jewish settlement. It was established certainly several years, some think about a hundred and fifty years, before the Exile. The documents give us a most interesting glimpse into the intimate daily life, social, economic and religious, of the Jews who dwelt there. They worshiped Jehovah and had a temple dedicated to him.

ISRAEL, THE KINGDOM OF THE NORTH

48. Omri. The Biblical account of Omri is practically limited to about fourteen verses; yet he must have been one of the greatest kings of the northern kingdom. His dynasty continued for four successive reigns. He waged successful foreign wars, built the city of Samaria and made it his capital. He made so profound an impression upon surrounding nations that for generations after his death the Assyrians spoke of Israel as "the land of Omri." Jehu, who began a later dynasty, is spoken of as "son of Omri." From the Mesha inscription, familiarly known as "the Moabite Stone," we learn that Omri had subjected the Moabites, and that he had occupied the Moabite city, Medeba, and its environs for a considerable time. The inscription of Mesha, king of Moab, reads as follows:

"Omri king of Israel—he oppressed Moab many days, because Chemosh [the god of Moab] was angry with his land . . . Now Omri had possessed all the land of Medeba and dwelt in it his days and half the days of his son, forty years, but Chemosh restored it in my day."

49. Ahab. From the inscription of Mesha, king of Moab, we learn that Ahab was not able to hold Moab in subjection, but that Mesha threw off the yoke of Israel. Mesha's account of it throbs with human interest.

"And his son [Ahab] succeeded him [Omri], and he also said, 'I will oppress Moab.' In my day he spoke according to [this] word, but I saw [my desire] upon him and upon his house, and Israel utterly perished forever."

We learn from an inscription of Shalmaneser III of Assyria that Ahab formed a part of the coalition which tried to resist the invasion of Assyria. He furnished two thousand chariots and a contingent of ten thousand men.

Ahab met his end in a way that stirs the admiration of the reader in spite of any opinions we may have as to his degenerate influence upon Israelite religious ideals. Early in the day of the fatal battle with the Syrians he was wounded. He ordered his charioteer to drive him out of the midst of the battle. But held up in his chariot, the blood running from his wound, he directed the battle until sunset, when he died.

50. The Appearance of Elijah. The modern inhabitant of the desert, with his leathern girdle and hairy breast and arms, is said to be an exact portrait of Elijah of old.

Elijah especially interests us because he was the greatest patriotic leader who ever came from the tribes that never had crossed the Jordan. From the lonely pasture lands of Gilead appears this prophet, hardy, fleet of foot, indifferent to comfort, dressed like a shepherd and as independent as a Bedouin.

"He appears suddenly and as suddenly vanishes.
He goes through the history like a meteor."

51. Moab. Sir George Grove, through a study of allusions in the Old Testament and the use of historical imagination, gives us a vivid picture of the nation of Moab. "The nation appears as high-spirited, wealthy, populous, and even to a certain extent, civilized, enjoying a wide reputation and popularity. . . . In its cities we discern a 'great multitude' of people living in 'glory,' and in the enjoyment of 'great treasure,' crowding the public squares, the house tops, and the ascents and descents of the numerous high places and sanctuaries, where 'the priests and princes' of Chemosh minister to the anxious devotees. . . . In this case there can be no doubt that among the pastoral people of Syria, Moab stood next to Israel in all matters of material wealth and civilization."

52. Jehu. This king, who held an important position in Ahab's bodyguard, rose to the throne on a wave of insurrection which had been helped along by Elisha. The basis of this revolt was the popular discontent aroused by Ahab's championing of Phœnician worship and his inhuman

murder of Naboth in order to secure possession of his vineyard. Although Jehu was a religious zealot, there was little that he had in common with the nobler faith of Elisha. But he was quite aware of Elisha's great influence and gladly availed himself of the prophet's support. Jehu was a man of fearless and aggressive action. He moved with lightning rapidity. At heart he ever remained a soldier; and his aims, which were apparently religious, were in reality political. He won for himself by his bloody, inhuman deeds the passionate condemnation of the prophetic circle. Hosea later reflects this prophetic judgment when he says, "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu and will cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease." During his reign we learn from the famous obelisk of Shalmaneser III that "Jehu son of Omri" paid tribute to Assyria.

53. The Delivering of Israel under Jehoash. In the time of Jehoash, so the Scriptures tell us, "Jehovah raised up a savior for Israel." This savior was thought to have been Assyria; but a recent inscription, discovered in northern Assyria, tells of a hitherto almost unknown Aramean kingdom that rose at this time and conquered Damascus and northern Assyria. Its leader was "Zakar, king of Hamath and Laash." The account reads as follows:

"I was a man of humble birth, and the Lord of Heaven helped me and supported me, and the Lord of Heaven made me king over Hazrak. And Benhadad son of Hazael, king of Aram, united against me seventeen kings. All these kings laid siege to Hazrak. And they raised a wall higher than the wall of Hazrak, and dug a trench deeper than its trench. Then I lifted up my hands to the Lord of Heaven, and the Lord of Heaven answered and spoke to me through seers and astrologers and said to me: 'Fear not, for I made thee king, and will support thee and will deliver thee from these kings who are besieging thee.' "

54. The Fall of Samaria. With the fall of Samaria, the capital of Israel, the northern kingdom came to an end. For two centuries it had withstood successive attacks by Syria, and even the great military machine of Assyria besieged it three years before they succeeded in taking it. It was a remarkably situated city. It stood on an isolated oblong hill which was quite precipitous on one side and easily fortified on the other. Sargon, who finally took the city after his predecessor Shalmaneser V had besieged it for three years, describes the capture as follows:

"At the beginning of my reign, in my first year . . . Samaria I besieged. I captured twenty-seven thousand, two hundred and ninety people from its midst, I carried captive fifty chariots, I took these as an addition to my royal force . . . I returned and made more than formerly to dwell there. People from lands which my hands had captured I settled in the midst. My officers over them as governors I appointed. Tribute and taxes I imposed upon them after the Assyrian manner." These settlers brought in from foreign lands, mingling with the people left in the land, became the Samaritans, the ancestors of those who later created difficulty for Nehemiah and Ezra.

55. THE IMPORTANCE OF ISRAEL. "Compared with Egypt and Assyria, Israel at the height of its prosperity was never more than an insignificant petty dominion, a mere 'buffer state.' And yet, judged by conquests in the spiritual dominion, Egypt and Assyria count for little indeed by the side of Israel. Those puissant empires have been dust for thousands of years; but the empire, the dominion of Israel, continues to this day. Babylon could hale men's bodies into captivity, but Israel has won a goodlier prize in capturing and captivating men's souls. While bigness may perish, greatness endures."—J. Warschauer

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